The Beaver

A MAGAZINE OF THE NORTH

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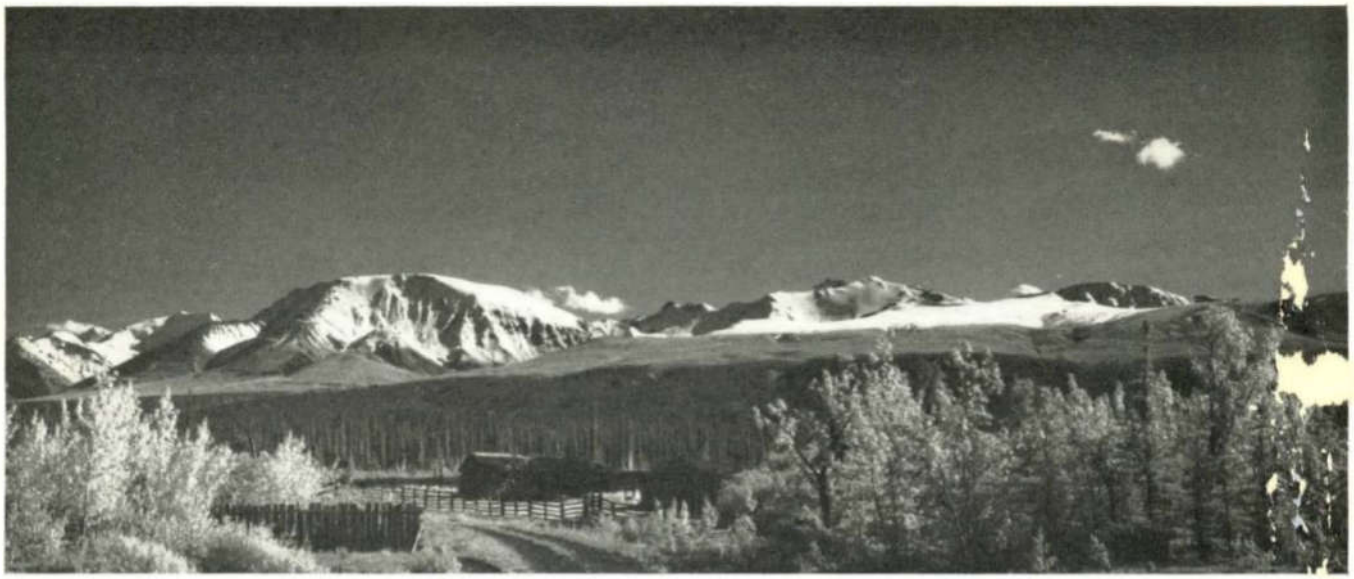

Mountains of the Yukon. Richard Harrington

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OUTFIT 283

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WARRIORS of the PLAINS

Story and Photos
by Philip H. Godsell

Each summer the remnants of the once-mighty Assiniboines meet in colourful assembly, and hark back to the days when they roamed the wide prairies.

THE annual gathering of the Assiniboine tribe was under way. Again, as of old, the painted lodges of the tribe arose in the conventional camp-circle upon a velvety green meadow, fringed with lordly pines and backed by the snow-capped bulk of Cascade Mountain. From far and near they had come, grizzled old buffalo hunters, bucks, squaws and children, by saddle horse, *travois* and wagon, until nearly a thousand of them were camped on the outskirts of Banff, in the heart of the Canadian Rockies, with their pony herds and camp equipment.

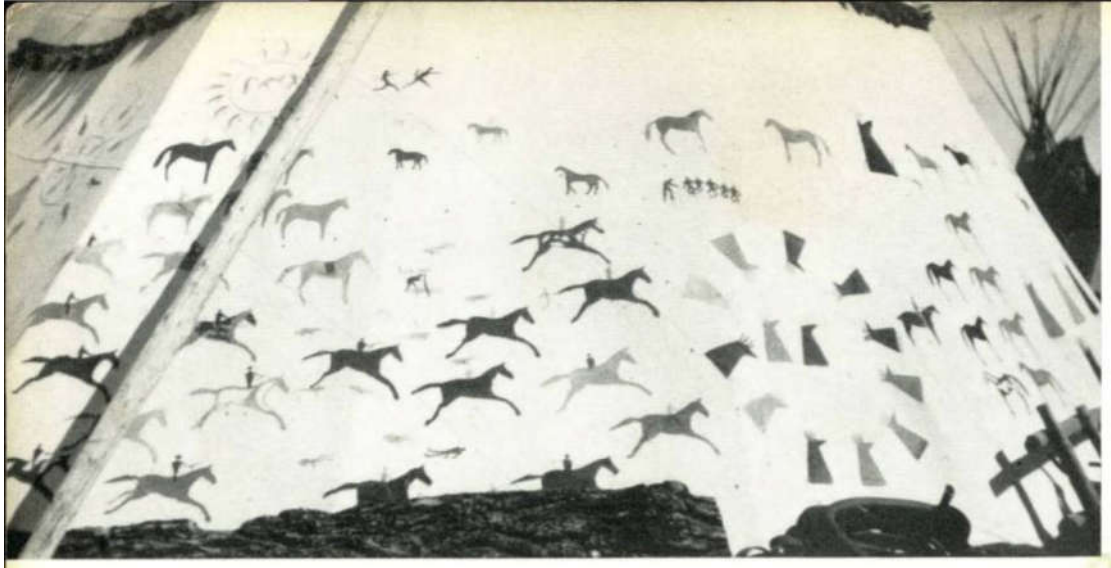
Reclining on a springy couch of aromatic balsam boughs within the large and commodious teepee of Chief Calf Child, medicine man and mystic of the Northern Assiniboine, or Stoney tribe, I listened as he told of raids and buffalo hunts of bygone days.

"Hi! Hi! *Okemow*, those were great days when *pi-zi*, the buffalo, darkened these plains over which we crossed to come here!" For a moment the old fellow had forgotten his greying locks and seemed to be living in that carefree past, so near and yet so far away. It was the old, inevitable lament over the passing of the red man's friend—the buffalo. Always you heard it when these old hunters got together.

"Tonight we eat buffalo ribs and marrow-fat," he continued, lifting a coal from the lodge-fire and dropping it within the stone bowl of his long-stemmed pipe. "But this time we shall not be killing them with our arrows; we shall be accepting the white man's bounty. They are giving us two of those poor animals they keep imprisoned within wire ropes near the big stone lodge [the Banff Springs Hotel] where the rich whites come to play. . . . *A-eee!* when I look at those buffalo there is only sorrow in my heart. Often I have led my pony to the fort at Beaver Hills [Fort Edmonton] laden down with the finest buffalo pemmican to keep the white men from starving. Always did I consider them my friends. Yet, today, they own the land—everything. Even the wild game is theirs."

With the gift of a few plugs of black tobacco, and the assurance that the meat of the captive buffalo would probably taste as good as ever, I succeeded in bringing a smile to the face of the old chieftain, then strolled amongst the teepees to renew acquaintance with Chief Bearspaw, whose father signed the treaty with Queen Victoria's commissioners in 1877, forever surrendering their erstwhile hunting grounds, and who hunted buffalo where the city of Calgary rises today; with Wolf Teeth, and Jacob Two Young Man, head of the Chinequay Stoneys, and with visiting Blackfeet and Sarcees; once bitter enemies, now brought together under a common bond of paleface subjugation. My footsteps finally led me to the buffalo-emblazoned teepee of sturdy Walking Buffalo, or George McLean, the tribal medicine man. Adopted when a youngster by the Reverend John McLean, and given his name, George studied law in Toronto; but the call of the wild was too much for him and he returned to the foothills

Chief Horse Boy wearing an old-style headdress of eagle feathers, ermine and shaved buffalo-horns.



This teepee painting depicts an attack on an enemy camp after the war party had been surrounded and forced to defend themselves in a rifle pit.

to become the repository of the folklore and traditions of his tribe.

As I roamed around the village the sunlight flashed whitely upon the painted lodges, upon heraldic designs in green, red and black of buffalo heads, flying eagles and predatory thunder birds. But the paintings on the outer walls of these teepees were no mere decorations. Each design was replete with symbolism. For each lodge there is a fascinating legend of origin; the designs having been revealed through dreams after a long period of fasting and solitary communion with Nature. Thus each became the exclusive property of the owner. His painted lodge was not an entity in itself but part of a complex of religious objects and "medicine" articles belonging to the owner, accompanied by obscure rituals and taboos. No Indian could copy the design on another lodge. Painted lodges have been, and still are, transferred from one owner to another along with the rituals, the fee usually running from six to twelve horses. When a teepee becomes worn out, a new one, with the same decorations, can take its place, but the owner must destroy the original, sacrificing it to the sun by spreading it upon a lake and sinking it beneath the water.

Hung on tripods behind some of the lodges, or suspended above the doorways, were the sacred medicine pipe bundles containing, under numerous wrappings of bear and other skins, the medicine pipe and numerous stuffed animals and birds that had also appeared to the original owner in a dream, or vision. These bundles are among the most prized possessions of the Indians. They entail endless ceremonials and care, and offer imaginary protective power from sickness and misfortune while completely dominating the life of the honoured Medicine Pipe Men. To the Indians they are what the Ark of the Covenant was to early Israelites. The Medicine Pipe Man dyes his robe, or blanket, a dark red. He also wears a tuft of hair in a little knot on the top of his forehead, and his face and hair are painted the same colour to designate his position. The owner has a special horse for its use, painted with special symbols when transporting it. These bundles also change hands from time to time, usually for a large fee—payable in horses.

All about me was life and movement. Strong-backed squaws were busy with their camp duties: erecting lodges, scraping skins, hauling water from a crystal creek that splashed down from the mountain, and bringing in huge piles of brush and firewood on their backs. Piled upon tripods of poles beside the smoke-stained teepees was a heterogeneous collection of dried meat, pack-saddles, gaudy rugs, pots, rifles and snow-white buckskins. Mounted riders were continually coming and going, always at a gallop, their plaited locks flying in the wind.

I was gazing on the last remnant of a once-powerful tribe; a tribe whose history is inextricably linked with the geographical discovery and commercial exploitation of the West. It was the Assiniboine tribe who escorted the first Hudson's Bay man, Henry Kelsey, to the rolling prairies of the West in the summer of 1690. It was the same tribe, allied with the Crees, who came spilling out of the forests to the eastward and drove the peerless Blackfeet from the rich buffalo pastures of Manitoba and Saskatchewan with "detonating bows" (muskets) secured from the white traders of Hudson Bay. But the feature that especially binds the Assiniboines to ourselves is the three centuries of unswerving friendship between themselves and the whites—a friendship that did not waver even in the most trying moments.

Back in pre-European days, before intruding palefaces had commenced to revolutionize aboriginal life, a million and a quarter copper-skinned aborigines roamed the six

A warrior in his buffalo headdress holds a bow and arrows. His wife wears a beautiful beaded skin dress, and a non-traditional feather.

million square miles of forest, mountain, stream and prairie that make up the continent of North America. Yet, with all this elbow room, the scattered bands of red men could not live in peace. Kindred tribes fought for the very love of fighting, imbued with that predatory spirit which is by no means foreign to civilized nations. Frequently whole tribes would be disrupted and dispersed over some trivial domestic quarrel such as the shooting of a dog, or the abduction of a comely squaw.

During the epoch preceding the arrival of Europeans, a war-like race exceeding forty thousand in number—and—called by their Algonkin enemies the *Nadowe-es-iw*, a name which the French subsequently shortened into "Scioux"—was emerging from the forests of Minnesota upon the plains. Nomad hunters of buffalo, they were constantly in motion. The horse had not yet put in an appearance, and the difficulties of transportation prevented them from acquiring much in the way of material possessions. Women and dogs were the burden carriers, as they still are amongst the roving Athapascans to the northward; and because loads were limited, even the lodges were very small.

Then came *sunka wakan*, the "mysterious dog" as the Sioux called it. In 1541 Francisco Vasquez de Coronado rode northward across the Rio Grande, exploring the unknown West as far as Kansas, with about thirty mounted men. From these, and later expeditions, came the wild horses which were to completely revolutionize the West and give to it a picturesqueness it would otherwise have lacked.

The acquisition of these powerful steeds broadened all fields of aboriginal activity. Soon the Sioux were brought into open conflict with tribes hitherto unknown. With improved transportation facilities their teepees became larger, their possessions more extensive, and their spirit more aggressive and intolerant. It was during this period of transition that the Assiniboines and the parent body of Sioux ceased to see eye to eye and separated, the former sweeping northward to the deep pine forests of the Lake Nipigon and Lake of the Woods region. That the separation had occurred prior to 1640, when mention of the Sioux is made by the Jesuits, is obvious since, in the *Relation* of that year the Assiniboines are listed as a separate tribe.

But the Assiniboines were not satisfied to remain a woodland tribe, living principally on fish. Those mighty herds of buffalo that roamed almost ceaselessly across the prairies to the westward acted as a magnet to them, as they did to the Crees and other forest tribes. Thus the Assiniboines emerged upon the grassy plains of Manitoba

A sacred medicine pipe bundle. The wrappings of bear and other skins contain stuffed birds and animals. This one cost 12 horses.

The historic "Never-sits-down" shield of shrunken buffalo hide, which by tradition antedates the coming of the whites. The owner was supposed to acquire so much power from it that the enemies he pursued never had a chance to sit down.

and met the vanguard of the Cree migration sweeping down from the dismal swamps of Hudson Bay. They did not fight, as might have been expected. Instead they joined forces and formed an enduring alliance in order to present a united front against the warlike Blackfeet whom they found already arrayed against them; determined, it seemed, to keep for themselves the lush buffalo pastures that rolled westward towards the mountains.

The appearance, late in the seventeenth century, of the palisaded forts of the Hudson's Bay Company upon the western shore of Hudson Bay proved propitious to the plans of Crees and Assiniboines alike—a fact that the astute Pierre Radisson had not overlooked when, in 1682, he established a fort at the mouth of the Hayes River—a river that communicated with Lake Winnipeg and afforded an excellent highway for their canoes. By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Assiniboines already overran the plains, being estimated by Alexander Henry at two thousand fighting men, or approximately ten thousand people.

Divorced from their woodland culture their whole lives now revolved around the buffalo. The meat provided nourishing food, the brain was used for tanning, the hides

George Crawler, son of Chief Calf Child, wears a handsome double-tailed bonnet and carries a coup stick, which served the purpose of a banner in battle.

Costume worn by an Indian in a dance imitating the courting ritual of the prairie chicken.

were manufactured into robes or were divested of their hair and made into teepee covers, clothing, moccasins, *parfleche* trunks and shields. The sinews were converted into bowstrings and thread, the hoofs provided glue, while even the stomach was used for cooking food in. From their method of cooking meat in green hides sunk in a hole in the ground, and bringing water to a boil by dropping in red-hot stones, this tribe derived their name—Assinibwat, (Kelsey's "Assinepoet") or Stone Sioux, since contracted into Stoneys.

The outstanding event of the year, which usually followed the buffalo hunt, was the Sun Dance. To the Indian the Sun festival meant, not the self-torture associated with it by the whites, but the renewing of family and tribal ties. From far and near would come the tribesmen, accompanied by their wives, children and countless dogs, their baggage hauled upon scores of *travois* drawn by wiry Indian ponies. Soon hundreds of ornamental teepees would encircle a large stretch of grass-covered prairie whereon the bare skeleton of the sun dance lodge awaited final completion. While the wind rustled the buffalo grass hundreds of sleek ponies would scamper here and there, glad to be relieved of their heavy loads. Soon the *A-ha! A-ha! A-ha!* of the gamblers, accompanied by the vibrant throb of drums, would indicate that staid old warriors and young bucks were once again indulging in their favourite game of chance.

As the sun reached the zenith there would be a sudden commotion. With wild whoops a score of painted and befeathered horsemen would come plunging into camp, dragging behind them a tall cottonwood tree denuded of its branches, to be used as the sacred centre-pole of the mystic lodge. As the Medicine Man, his head adorned with ermine cap and buffalo horns, gave the signal for the

erection of the pole, pandemonium would break loose. While a score of half-naked braves built a circle of evergreen bowers to house the dancers, hundreds of screaming, whooping warriors would come thundering into, and around, the open lodge; the bystanders adding to the din by firing off their guns, pounding drums, shouting, singing and shaking strings of bells or rawhide rattles.

During the uproar the Medicine Man would attach to the top of the centre pole a bundle containing gifts to the spirits, and an effigy of the buffalo. Then it would be pulled to an upright position by the yelping throng.

Finally the young men who had decided to demonstrate their courage to the spirits would present themselves to the Medicine Man who smeared paint upon their arms and faces. Incisions were made in the breasts of each, skewers pushed through and these attached to rawhide lines depending from the centre pole. As the drums boomed out, and the querulous chant of the singers arose, the young men would commence their dance, gazing steadily at the sun as they jerked upon the thongs in order to tear the flesh loose and free themselves, and blowing on eagle-bone whistles carried between their lips.

Although their bronzed bodies glistened with the sweat of anguish, not a sign of the torture they were enduring would appear upon their painted faces. When, at last, the muscles were wrenched apart and they staggered, half-fainting, from the enclosure, it was sufficient reward for them to see the admiring looks of relatives and friends, and catch the flashing glances of sloe-eyed belles who flocked arround with shouts of approval, calling all to witness the "strong-heartedness" of brothers, friends or sweethearts.

The last night was one of general celebration. The big camp was one huge blaze of light, the teepees with their grotesque paintings resembling so many conical Chinese lanterns as the pine-faggots crackled merrily within, while the odour of steaming puppy or roasting venison was borne upon the balmy summer air, and everyone visited from lodge to lodge.

But a paternal Government, anxious to eradicate everything that tended to keep the Indian still an Indian, put its foot down on the Sun Dance—the pivot around which both the spiritual and social life of the plains tribes revolved. Now it has been revived and may be seen annually, but in an emasculated form.

Among Crees, Blackfeet, Sioux and other tribes alike, the desire for the old free life found expression in the early '90's in prophets, ghost dances, and the belief in the coming of an Indian Messiah who was going to restore the buffalo and drive out the white race. This ended in the last short rise to power of Sitting Bull, followed by his death and the battle of Wounded Knee. Not long since the same feeling assailed the Assiniboines, though in a milder form. Upon the shoulders of my old friend Totanka Chinka (Calf Child) fell the burden of devising some mysterious means of dissipating the hordes of palefaces who had crowded the Indians from the ranges, and of bringing back the buffalo. A mystic himself, Calf Child went into a trance and beheld a vision. From behind a silver cloud appeared *Wahcondah*, the Great Spirit. "You must sleep on a mountain for three successive nights," he commanded. "The thunder will roll over your head, and each time you will daub white paint upon your cheeks. Then you will return to your people, heal the sick, and restore the old religion of prayer and burnt offerings and the incense of the sacred Medicine Pipe, now so fallen into decay through Christian teachings that the Indians have lost both their courage and their earlier independence and power!"

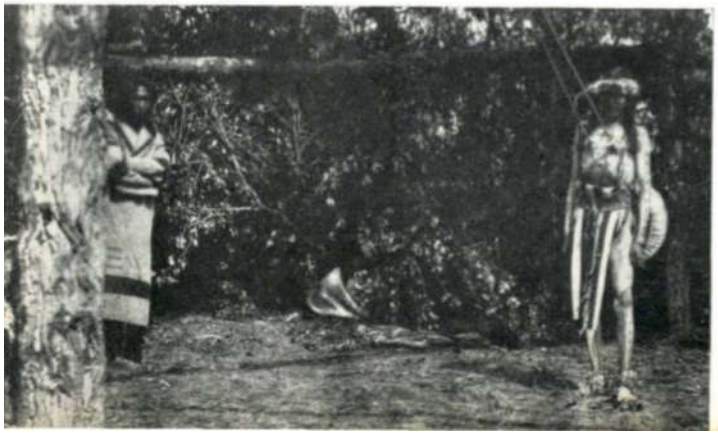
Acting on these spiritual instructions Calf Child hired drummers, taught them the song the Great Spirit had revealed to him, daubed white paint upon his face and clothes; painted the Thunder Bird upon his blanket as a sign of the source of his mandate, and held a public dance. With his breath alone he appeared to heal the sick brought to him from far and near. His fame spread like a prairie fire. Each patient whom the prophet cured brought him an eagle-feather to wear in his war-bonnet when the thunder rolled, and daubed his own cheeks with white paint so that the thunder would pass him by.

Many Indians of the Sarcee, Blackfoot and other tribes were still wearing similar feathers not long since, acknowledging Calf Child as their spiritual leader. But the buffalo failed to return, and the intruding white race mysteriously to melt away—and the last revolt against Christianity went the way of the Ghost Dance, and similar attempts to conjure back the lost freedom of bygone days.

A little over a century ago the Stoneys numbered more than 10,000 souls, and wandered across the prairies from the Missouri to the Red and Saskatchewan rivers in pursuit of buffalo, ever fighting with the Sioux, the Blackfeet and the Crows, but always preserving a steady friendship with the whites. Now, through warfare, smallpox, the disappearance of the buffalo and the encroachment of civilization, the tribe has been reduced to 2,600 souls, of whom nearly one-half are resident in the United States, the remainder living on reserves in Alberta and Saskatchewan.

Each year the lofty Cascade Mountain sees the friendly Assiniboines return, in diminishing numbers, to the scene of their carefree and unhampered past. And each year, as the fumes of the *lu-cob-bee* curl up from their red-stone pipes to mingle with the wood-smoke of the teepee fires, aged warriors and buffalo hunters in rapidly thinning ranks are transported back, in imagination, to those happy days when the pony herds filled the valleys, and the bison roamed the plains. ◆

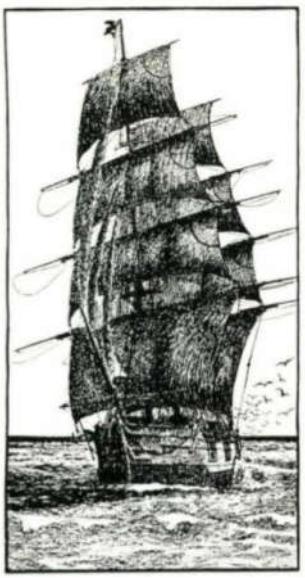
A 65-year-old picture of a painted brave with skewers thrust through his chest muscles and attached to lines leading to the centre pole of the Sun Dance Lodge. W. H. Boorne



YOUNG APPRENTICE

James McDougall

The first part of the diary kept by a young Scot on his way from London to Hudson Bay, 90 years ago.



Ship "Prince of Wales."

JUNE 7, 1862. I joined the ship "Prince of Wales" of London to day at Gravesend about 4 o'clock P.M. Went on shore until 9 oclock when there was a salute fired of 14 guns on the Honourable Companys departure from Gravesend for London. Turned in to bed about 11 P.M.

Sunday 8th. Got on deck this morning about 6 & examined the ship of which I need not say anything more than that she is allowed to be the finest vessel that sails from the Thames. She is a large full rigged ship of about 1200 tons burden mounting eight guns (12 Pounders) altho she is pierced for fourteen. There are two very large cabins. The after one of which is occupied by a clergyman [George Mason] & his family (two daughters & servant girl) and the other by the Captain & other officers of the ship & clerks going out in the Company's Service. Of the latter there are three along with myself—Bil [Wm. Cornwallis] King, Alex McKenzie & Arthur Tibbins or Tibbits or something like that. The former is a nice lively young chap of about 16, a fine frank hearty lad, a native of Douglas, Isle of Man. The second is a first class chap also belonging to Edinburgh & as for the third Tibbits or what ever his name is, I think it will be quite enough to say that he keeps the ship in a perfect uproar of laughter where ever he is. He is a chap of about 5 ft. 10 in. in height and goes swaggering up & down the deck with a wid a wake hat on the back of his head and it is generally believed amongst us in the cabin that there is a want about him. Our Doctor too is a capital fellow quite young & a fine hearty chap he is.

There were a number of the Company down to day seeing us all right & enquiring into some scrap—Mr. Tibbs (as we generally call him) got into about getting his pocket picked before he was carried on board after having dined with the Company in Pallisters Hotel.

About six P.M. made signal to the Prince Arthur to prepare for sea, fired a gun & stood down the river under maintopsail & jib with cheers three times three from the shore when the crews of both ships manned the rigging & cheered them in return—The Prince Arthur following close astern. Went to bed about 9.30 when all lights were put out.

Monday 9th. Came on deck this morning about 6 a.m. & found we were running along shore about 4 miles off the Suffolk coast with a light wind with fore & main Royals set. Everything was in confusion on deck to day getting things put to rights, getting running rigging aloft, securing the guns &c. Wind continued the same until about 6 P.M. when after a thunder storm a heavy squal struck us from the N.E. which continued for about two hours making us careen thro the water at the rate of 8 or 9 knots an hour.

Tuesday 10th. Brought up in my sleep this morning about 4 a.m. by two guns being fired right above my birth as a signal for a boat to take the pilot ashore—went to sleep again & got up 7.30. Came on deck & found the Prince Arthur about 200 yards on our weather beam which surprised me a little as she was just in sight when we turned in last night but found on enquiry that we had been about for two or three hours waiting to get the Pilot ashore. Very little wind, both ships under studding sails going along on taught bowline, wind at N.E. shaped our course & stood away from Land today—Stood away to the north with the wind on our quarter every rag of sail set that would draw, continued so all night running as high as 9 knots an hour—about six this evening the Prince Arthur was about 10 or 11 miles astern.

King, McKenzie & I went aloft this afternoon & were chased by three of the seamen—The other two were soon caught but I gave my man about quarter of an hour or twenty minutes work before he got hold of me, having very nearly escaped as I was just about 3 or four yards from deck coming down the main back stay when he got hold of me.

Sunday 15. Came on deck this morning & found a great change. Sun very strong & the sea going down before a fine fresh breeze. Saw a large ship about 8 or 9 miles to wind ward which was made out to be our Consort the "Prince Arthur." Towards mid-day a small schooner hove in sight bearing towards us. On coming near we fired a gun & hove too as we wished to speak him. She came round under our stern, made her out to be a vessel belonging to Dramen [Bremen?] & from them we learned that we were still upward of 100 to the N.E. of Orkney, we had therefore blown about 200 miles to leeward between Wednesday evening & Saturday morning.

Tuesday 17th. On coming on deck this morning I found we were running in land with high hills on both sides & on turning a point about 3 miles up this channel we came in sight of the town of Stromness [Orkney]. This is a very

fine harbour well sheltered & with two entrances one thro' Gramesay [Graemsay] sound from the Atlantic, & the other from the Pentland Firth.

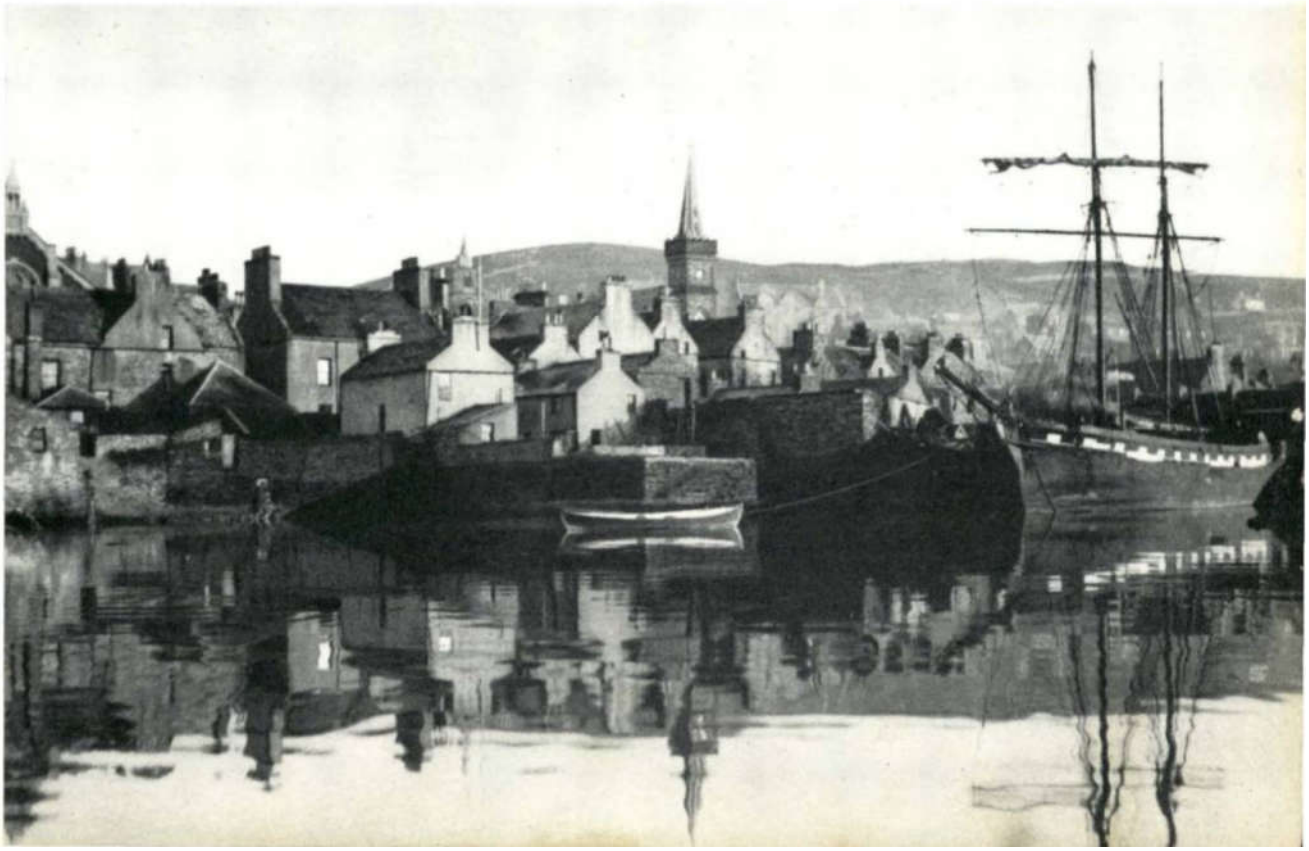
After coming to anchor both ships fired a salute of 8 guns each. The Prince Arthur came to anchor about an hour before us—We all went on shore with the Capt. after dinner in the gig. Being obliged to stay on shore our first look out was after lodgings which the Capt. managed for us by getting accommodation for us all in Mr. Fletts Commercial Hotel. After tea we went out to have a stroll thro the place—The Town is built on the face of a hill in a beautiful sit. but capable of a great deal of improvement both sanatory & architectural.

Tuesday 24th. Nothing worthy of note taking place—I pass over a day or two—Today King & I went out shooting, went about 6 miles round the shore by Gramesay Sound where we came to a high perpendicular rock with the sea roaring at its base. The face of this rock was completely covered with sea birds. On looking over we could see their nests hanging in the crevices in clusters & the young ones sitting by. We got a number of rabbits, pigeons, & sea foul. This evening we rather terrified the villagers—About 12 o'clock The Dr., King, McKenzie, Tibbitt & I accompanied by Cowie the Honble. Co. Agent at Stornoway & an old school fellow of mine at St. Andrews, all sallied out thro the place with a fiddle, concertina, and a number of trays &c. that we found about the Hotel—after passing up & down thro the place bringing the whole of the inhabitants to their windows in their nightcaps we got into the Prince Arthurs water boat, which the boatswain Carpenter & a few others belonging to Stromness had got to come ashore in to stay all night, & pulled out to the ships we paid the Prince Arthur a visit going around her giving them a peal of music Oh how delightful, quite charming,—we then pulled away to the Prince of Wales but before reaching her, the Dr. came over Bob Tibbitts head with the fiddle making it fit round his neck like a collar then commenced a pretty "shine," concertina, trays, fiddle, &c. rattling about one anothers head—Returned too the Hotel about 5 a.m. found the door locked went round to the end of the house, raised King on our shoulders up to the Drs. bedroom window where he got in & went down stairs & opened the door—Mrs. Flett being rather astonished next morning, she could not see how we got in.

Wednesday 25th. This being the day appointed for what is called the "Nor'Westers Pic Nic" (the ships going by the name of the Nor'Westers in Orkney) which is given by Capt. Herd every year.

The place fixed on this year was the island of "Hoy" a distance of 15 miles from Stromness on the other side of Gramesay sound. The Company embarked at the pier below the Hotel at 10 a.m. in three of the Prince of Wales boats Capt. Herd taking the lead in his gig, the ladies in the Life Boat & your humble servants the clerks, Dr., & Mr. Cowie bringing up the rear in the cutter—Altho we started half an hour behind the Capt. we landed first at "Hoy." On our coming up with Capt. his "give way men" were all in vain we had 4 young stout tars who bent to their oars like young horses—we thought he would have been displeased & give us a blowing up for taking such a bold step before the ladies & gentlemen who were in the gig with him, but he took it all in good joke & gave our chaps an extra drop for their work—The island of "Hoy" is greatly different from the other isles of Orkney. It rises abruptly—starting as it were out of the sea, whereas the others are generally of a flat character—It consists of a

Stromness Harbour, Orkney Islands.



Orkney harvest. Behind Stromness rises Cuilags Hill on the Isle of Hoy.

Mountain very steep, of two peaks covered with heather, in some places nothing but the bare rock & deep ravines running down the side. After about 2 hours hard labour we all managed to reach the top a number of the ladies very much fatigued. On reaching the top we struck across to the high precipiece of Hoy which stands facing the Atlantic, on arriving there the view was magnificient but really it was fearful to look down over the clifs—one or two of us crawled forward to look & even then lying all our lengths we seemed afraid to move fearing we might fall. It is the highest precipiece in Britain being 1400 feet high, the sea foaming against its perpendicular sides like thunder. This is where Lady Franklin looked over when she came to Orkney, Miss Beaton the young lady who went along with her being there with us & shewed us the place. We left this mighty rock & went down the other side of the hill towards the Dwarfie Stone which we reached after another hour & a halfs labour thro a long swampy valley of peat bogs, after reaching the foot of the hill which runs between Ward-hill & the principal hill of Hoy and where stands the Dwarfie Stone. It is a large block of hard sandstone all one solid mass which seems to have slid down the hill (Ward hill) from a ridge of rock about 100 yards above. At one end it is 7 ft: high at the other 5 ft:, 21 ft: long and 18 ft: broad. In the inside it consists of one apartment, with two beds one on each side & the whole cut out of the solid rock which seems to have been done by iron tools, the largest is 5 ft: long & 2 ft broad. One may judge of the size when 14 of us got crushed in together the most of them ladies, the great extent of room the crinolines filled up must also be taken into consideration. Shortly after arriving here it commenced to rain—after spending a considerable time we left for the beach where we were to dispose of the good things provided for us by Capt. Herd whom we found with the rest of the party seated in a house near the shore It was intended for us to dine on the grass but the rain spoiled that along with the sport we intended to have had afterwards. The three boat crews were snugly stowed away, aloft in the garret where Jack was making Jolly. Made for the boats about 6 o'clock & arrived at the Hotel all right further than being pretty well drenched.

Thursday 26th. Were out a few miles in the country to day with the Misses Johnston who were out with their ponies.

Saturday 28th. To day went to see the Standing Stones of Stennis which are situate on the north side of the road going to Kirkwall about 5 miles from Stromness close bye the Bridge of Broisgar. The stones are arranged in the form of a half circle and are from 12 to 20 feet high—One of the Stones has got a hole through it where it is said loving couples used to join hands when they took what was

called the promise of Odin. Returned home in the evening very much fatigued.

Tuesday 1st July. This day we were all invited out to the Misses Johnstones, along with Capt. Herd, Mr. Mason & family & a number of others—Left Stromness at 9 a.m. arriving at Orphir about 12 o'clock a distance of 9 miles. Very bad roads. Enjoyed ourselves exceedingly well, had dancing, plenty of riding on Shetland ponies some of our worthy friends getting pitched heels over head—Arrived at Stromness about 12 P.M. after taking good bye with the Misses Johnstones until our return from the Nor'West.

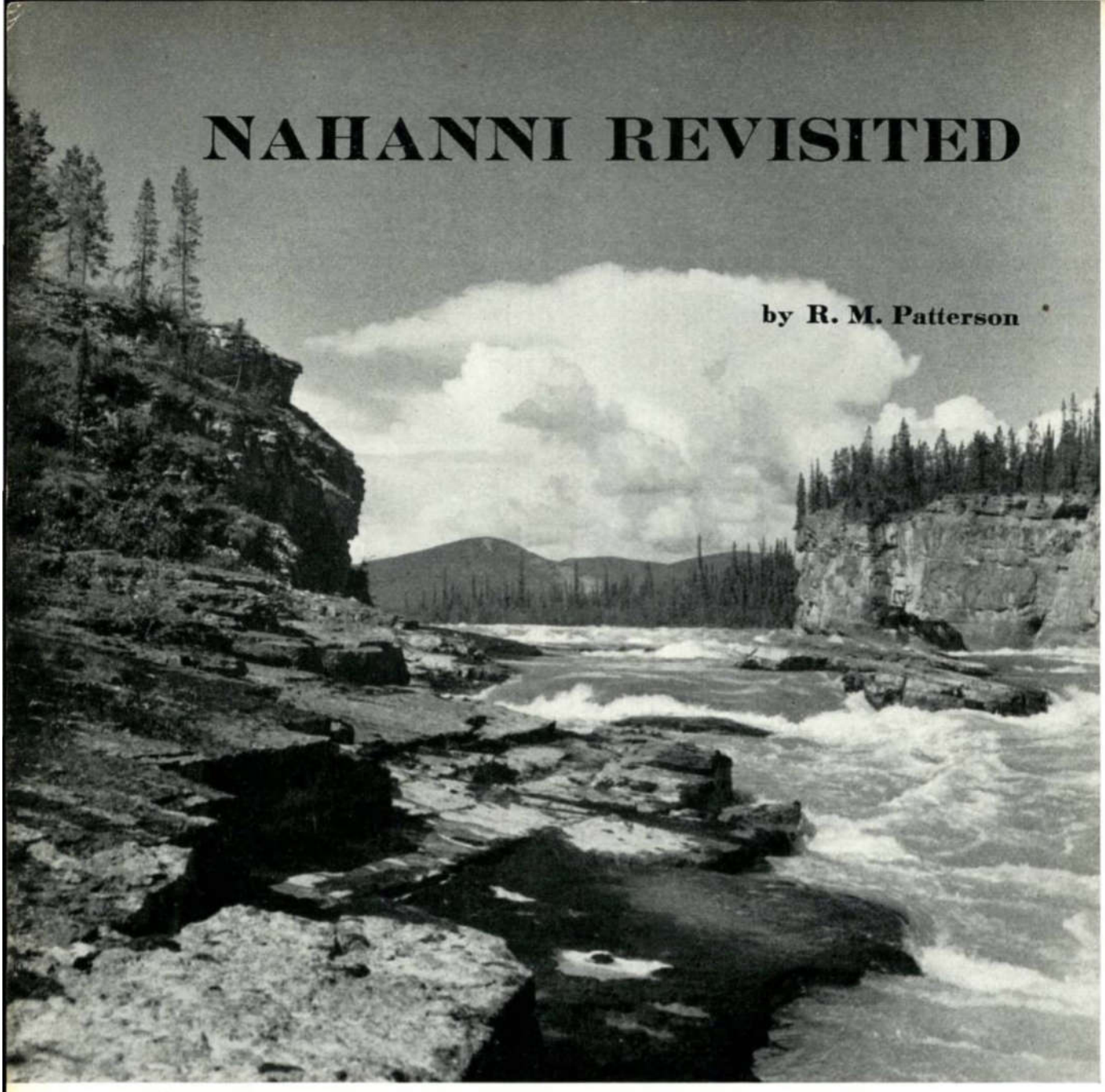
Wednesday 2nd Left the Hotel and took up our abode on board to day. Everything very quiet beyond the usual hustle on board a ship where upward of 100 men are; upward of 70 having joined here from the islands to go out to Hudson's Bay for five years. There are the same number goes out every year to take the places of the same number that comes home the whole being arranged like a piece of machinery one batch going out every year and another coming—If men had got to go out every year to the country the ship would always have to carry a crew close on one hundred men to work the ship amongst the ice. In the evening about 7 o'clock the original hands that came from London, had what they call "chucking the dead horse overboard." Sailors going on long voyages generally get a months pay in advance.—this month they call working for nothing as it is all spent before leaving—on the expiry of the first month they "chuck the dead horse over board" when pay commences—They all dress in fancy and comical dresses some in Turkish, Indian, and various other customs,—Paddy not forgotten, faces painted long pipes, feathers, etc. stuck in their head dresses, false beards, etc., etc., and everything very strange to look upon—The ceremony was opened by a harangue, from one who took the lead and pretended to be the owner of the dead horse, about his poor beast who had served him by day and night—after which he started a song and a block and tackle being taken from the foreyard down into the forecastle they all joined in at the chorus and commence hauling away—singing about the dead donkey etc, etc., making a terrible noise. At length the head appeared in the hatch way, then the neck, and so on until there stood on deck as fine a charger as any one could wish for. It was about the size of a common donkey the skin was of canvas painted, leather ears, heather for maine and tail. On getting it on deck the leader commenced clapping and stroking him down, etc., etc. It was then got on to a piece of canvas with a stretcher at each end and piece of rope tied at the middle of each stretcher upon which they all caught hold and commenced going round the decks, singing still about the dead horse and at every yard or so giving the piece of canvas a jirk with the ropes making the donkey rear. After going round by the half deck hatch (not being allowed to go further aft) they came to a halt under the main yard from the arm of which there was a line taken which was made fast round the donkey's neck and after a parting kiss and clap from its late owners was hauled way up to the yard arm and at every verse of the song (which was still going on) was jirked up and down to suit. At the end of the song, which was taking good bye "until the next time they should meet," they gave a heavy jirk breaking the piece of small twine that was round his neck and allowing him to drop overboard—then they cheered as seamen only can do. ◆

The next part of the journal will describe the voyage from the Orkneys to Hudson Strait.

Stromness from the south. In the foreground is the gun that was fired to announce the arrival of the Hudson's Bay Company ships.

NAHANNI REVISITED

by R. M. Patterson



The South Nahanni begins its tumultuous descent to the lip of the famous falls.
All photographs by the author.

TO the north the rocky spurs of the Mackenzie Mountains came down to the river, white and cold looking in the moonlight. To the south lay the low, forested banks that proclaimed the flat lands stretching back towards the far off Alberta Plateau. Overhead a great September moon fought a losing battle with a magnificent aurora that streamed and spilled across the sky, and put the stars to shame. Every colour of the rainbow was in it, and they in turn were reflected in the calm waters of the great river. The moon was down below there, too, and so were the golden poplars that lined the banks and crowded on the bars and islands—and, behind us, all this glory was split by our wake into a million pieces of gold and silver.

And I lay there, rolled in my eiderdown on the foredeck of the scow, listening to the rush of the Liard current beneath me and marvelling at all this beauty: no man, surely, ever had a more splendid bedground. And that was nothing but a piece of pure luck. We had spent eight weeks up the South Nahanni River and had figured on working south by canoe 300 miles up the Liard and Fort Nelson Rivers, back to the Alaska Road—and what should we do but fall in with Ed. Cooper, up from the Mackenzie, in a hurry to get to Fort Nelson, driving his boat and scow night and day in the full of the moon!

Just a piece of wonderful luck; and not the first we had had by a long sight. Curtis always claimed our good for-

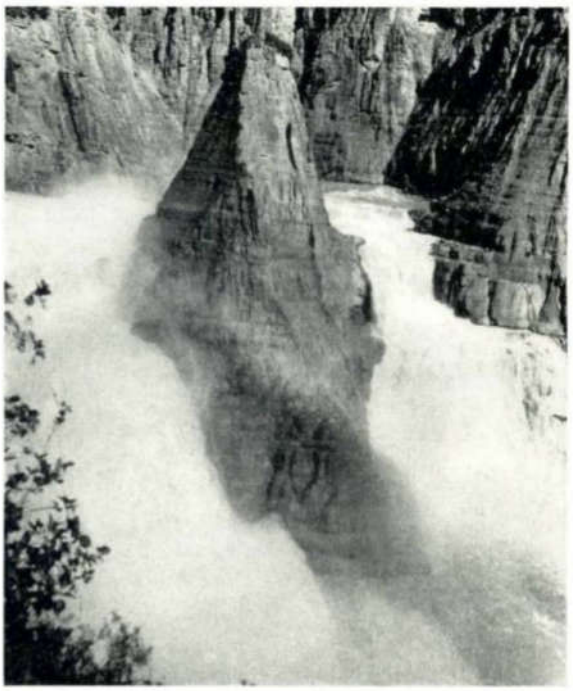
tune as his own private contribution to the outfit. "The Lord looks after Curtis," he would say, when a thunderstorm had just missed us or when, descending a loose scree, we had incautiously loosed off a ton or two of rock into the valley below. "The Lord always takes care of Curtis—and you two are with me, so why worry?" It was his outfit—Curtis R. Smith of St. Albans, Vermont. His friend Frank C. Wood was with him, and Curtis had invited me to make a third.

There was probably something in what he said about luck, for it had been a good summer. We had dropped down to Nahanni Butte from Fort Nelson in July, the three of us with two canoes. Then up to the Falls of the Nahanni, making a quick trip with Fred Sibbeston in his power boat, and caching our light canoe in Deadmen's Valley en route. From the Falls we ran down to the mouth of the Flat River, said good-bye to Fred, and then, with pole, line and paddle, struggled our eighteen foot freight canoe some 75 river miles up the Flat to the mouth of Irvine Creek. There we had cached our outfit and made a sashay on foot westwards, over a notch in a mountain barrier and on towards a jagged range of granite peaks that thrust up into the sunset out of the blue immensity of the caribou uplands. Late in August, when the first golden leaves were coming on the little poplars, we had come again to the cache and loaded up and turned the canoe's nose downstream—down many a riffle, through the Gate of the Nahanni and through the upper canyons, down to Deadmen's Valley, camping and climbing where and when we pleased.

There were so many memories—the sudden rush of white water in the riffles, the bobbing heads of swimming caribou, the swirl and struggle of the arctic grayling and those gigantic Dolly Vardens of the Flat River. We had felt the steel blue chill of evening in the canyons, and we had seen the golden glow of the morning sun breaking through the mists, and lighting pinnacle after glowing pinnacle on three thousand feet of canyon wall. And, returning to camp at dusk, we had seen the fire twinkling down below there, on the beaches, with its trail of blue wood smoke drifting out onto the river. Comfortably weary and very hungry, how one blessed the fellow that had got home first!

And still there had been Deadmen's Valley and its queer side canyons to explore, and the swift rush down the Cache Rapid into the Lower Canyon: and so on down by the Hot Springs and the Twisted Mountain, through the fast channels of the Splits, until in the end we had come to a landing in the quiet water by Nahanni Butte. Yes—decidedly a good summer, I thought; and the more I thought of it, the better it became. The human memory could well take for its motto that old one which many an ancient sundial bears: *Horas non numero nisi serenas*—"I count only the sunlit hours." Already those few days of rain and shadow were fading.

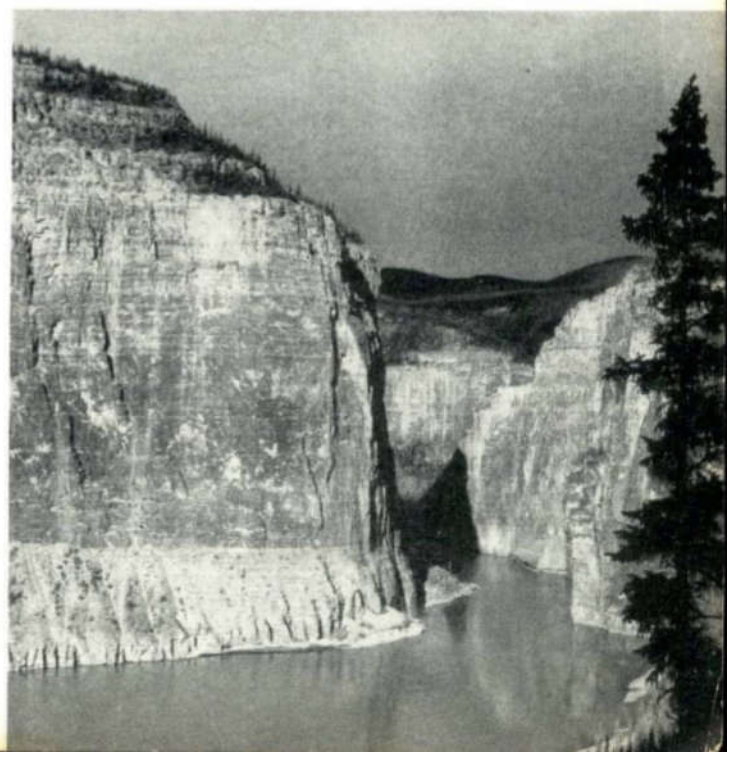
The rush of the water under the nose of the scow was making me drowsy—the golden days of summer were crowding back in force. . . .

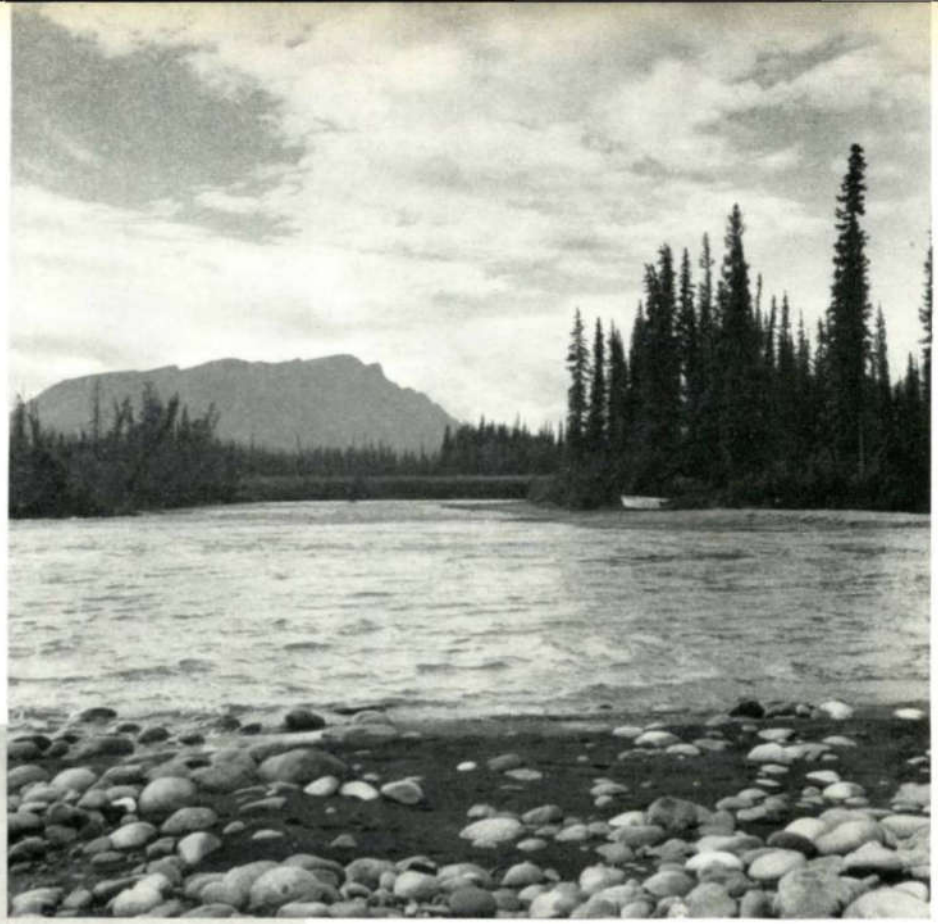


Virginia Falls, 316 feet high, splits on a rocky pyramid. The original of this in colour was taken by the author with one hand as he reached out over the precipice.

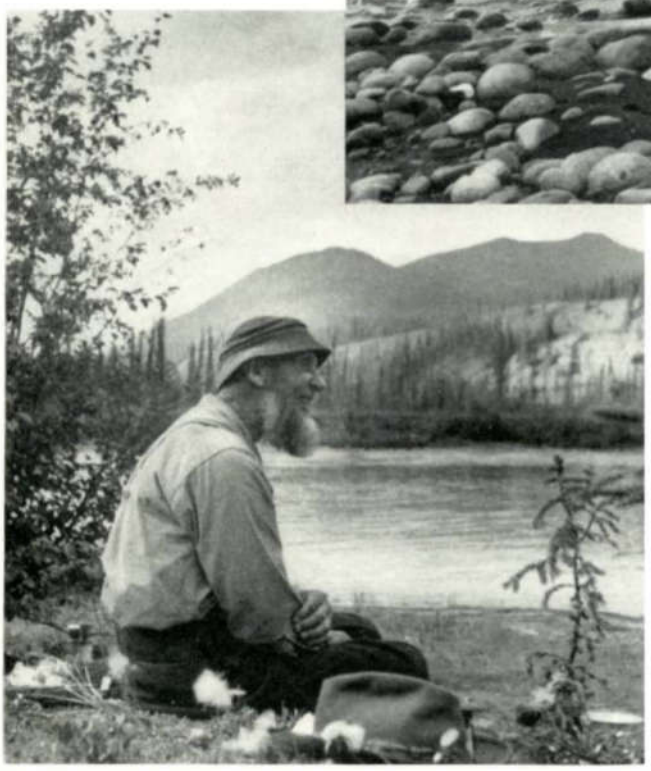
There was that July day at the Falls. We roared up the last reaches of the Falls Canyon in the bright morning sunshine, passing within a few yards of a wolverine which had just killed a rabbit by the water's edge. He started to pack the rabbit up the mountainside; then he turned and snarled at us and in so doing dropped his rabbit. Hastily he retrieved it and scrambled away into a stony coulee, out of sight among the rocks and scrub. We swept on round the last bend and there, at the far end of the Falls reach, was the great white thunder. We had the sun

The Gate of the Nahanni, looking upstream.





The great pool at Irvine Creek on the Flat River. "Faille was camped over the river in the big spruce."



Albert Faille, last of the old timers on the Nahanni.

behind us and it was still early morning—a rainbow was tautly stretched across the face of the waterfall, and the whole reach glittered with the flying spray. One could come to this place twenty times and never see it so perfectly. I had been there twice before but never at this time of day nor at this stage of water—and never had I seen the rainbow.

The Falls reach is about half a mile long and the water is fast. Slowly, with both outboards running full blast, we made our way up to the portage landing—a rocky, inhospitable beach close under the Falls. Above us the crest foamed white and sparkling against the summer sky: down below, in the darkly boiling waters of the pool, one could discern the hump of dead water caused by the upsurge from the depths—a sort of vertical eddy. It had vivid memories for me—and for a moment I was back in that hot August afternoon of 1927 when, drifting carelessly in a small canoe, I had passed over the centre of the hump and found myself being drawn down the forward slope towards the Falls. . . . Instinctively I rammed forward with my right foot, bracing myself again for those hard driving paddle strokes of long ago—and then I saw Curtis gazing at me wonderingly, and Frank jumping ashore with the line.

We landed and walked up over the portage trail on the south west bank to the calm water of the Upper Nahanni, climbing at least 500 feet before dropping down again to the river. Upstream from the head of the portage the river is like a lake, calm and placid. But, level with the upper landing, there is a small rock island, and below it the Nahanni rushes down a cataract, perhaps five hundred yards in length and with a drop of at least forty feet, to the lip of the first plunge. The fall itself—the largest in the North West Territories, with a drop of 316 feet—comes down in two steps with a rocky pyramid on the lower one that splits the final fall in two.

There you have the statistics. But we had also the deepest of blue skies, with snow white thunderheads climbing into it over the barren looking sheep mountains

to the north east. There were all the varied greens of the northern forest—and there was this wild water, blue and white, lashing and roaring down the cataract like some savage beast, to vanish over the lip of the fall, clouding the dripping pyramid with spray, thundering into the pool below. And there was still the rainbow. Hanging with my left hand onto a dwarf fir, my feet insecurely planted in a mixture of moss and Labrador Tea, I reached out over the edge of the precipice with my camera strapped to my right hand. It was worth a little effort—not everybody has taken a picture of a rainbow from above. It was impossible to sight, so I pulled the trigger blind and hoped for the best. The result proved to be well worth the risk.

And there was Faille*, the last of the old-timers on the Nahanni. He and I had said good-bye twenty-four years ago at the Twisted Mountain, and now, in July of 1951, Faille was somewhere up here, the only man besides ourselves in all this wilderness of the Upper Nahanni. Not till we were forty miles up the Flat River did we come on his sign. As we were eating our mid-day meal by the water's edge, a grizzly shuffled into view, working his way along the base of a cliff on the north side. He seemed interested in something in an eddy over there, but he saw us and decided that there were foreign devils in his bailiwick and scuffled away, with an annoyed "Woof!", up the mountainside. Later on we crossed over to investigate, and found a great dead timber wolf, with a bullet hole in him, bobbing up and down in the clear water.

We found Faille camped by the great pool at Irvine Creek. "So you've come back," he said to me, as we shook hands, "after all these years!" A day went by as we fished, cooked, loafed—and talked. Several outsize fish came ashore, at Frank's invitation, to grace the table: one whale of a Dolly Varden had seven mice in him, laid neatly head to tail, and another contained six mice, one salamander and one small fish. What with Faille stimulating Frank's culinary genius to new and wilder ways of cooking trout, the place soon began to hum gently of baked fish and timber wolf.

For Faille had been in the wolf business. He had been up the Nahanni since Oct. 1950 and had had scurvy for the first time in his life. Not recognizing the malady for what it was until his teeth began to get loose, he had become pretty weak by spring and early summer, and at that season the timber wolf, bringing the young out of the den to teach them to hunt, is interested in anything, including a weakened man. Unfortunately, from the wolves' point of view, they had picked the wrong man to demonstrate on: four great wolves lay dead, one on our side of the river, two on Faille's side, on the bar at the mouth of Irvine Creek, and one in the bush—and not one was over two hundred yards from Faille's mosquito net: the closest fifty yards. Then there was that one in the eddy down the river, and two more that had dragged themselves away to die—seven in all, good shooting. We cremated one and dragged the rest into the river—brutes the size of Shetland ponies.

*Pronounced Faley

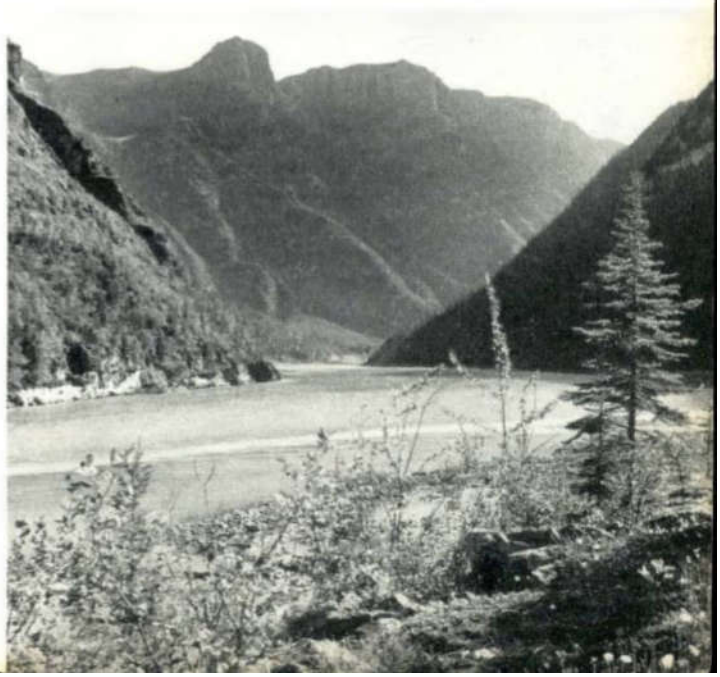
Faille was camped over the river from us in the big spruce. In 1928, when I had last seen it, the old carved tree was still standing. "*Irvine Creek*," it said, "*July 1, 1921, A. F. E. Brown. Frank Rae.*" and below that "July 1 Rain. July 2 Rain. July 3 Rain. July 4 Rain." These two well sprinkled travellers had made their way through the mountains from the Yukon, and it would be more than interesting to hear their story. Mr. Brown lives, I believe, at Carcross, Y.T.

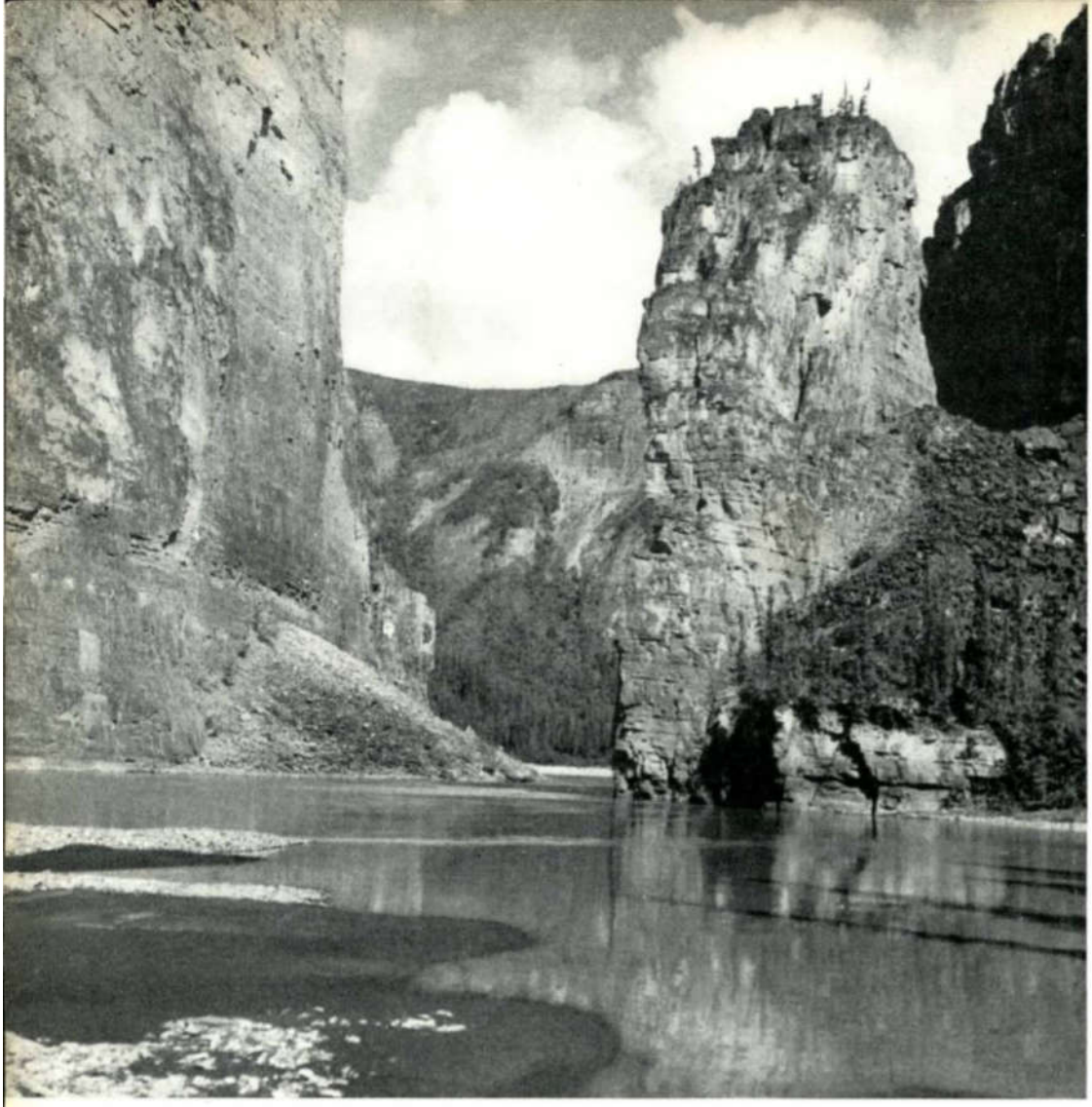
The old tree had fallen, and Faille had rolled it over and cut the blaze out to take it down to Fort Simpson—that fall, or sometime in 1952, it mattered little to him. Twice, at least, he had spent over two years on the Nahanni without seeing a living soul. We stood by the old blazed tree talking, Faille and I. He had been down on the Mackenzie for six years, and in the interval a fire, let loose by some idiot, had swept the Irvine Creek flat and burnt Faille's old cabin. "I had some idea of coming back here," he said, "but not now; not after this. It was a perfect country—all a man could wish for—and now look at it! It was so beautiful here, before."

The next morning all of Faille's stuff and all of ours was in his cache, and he disappeared northwards, with his pack on his back, up the long trough of Irvine Creek that runs through to the Upper Nahanni. Good luck to him wherever his trails may lead! We crossed the river, cached the canoe and started westwards, through the burnt muskeg towards the first of the granite ranges.

A couple of days later I left camp late in the evening and followed the stream up a stony coulee that came down from the mountain to the south of camp. The coulee lay deep in the evening shadow; I turned and climbed up to the western rim, up a fresh slide of broken granite, over small grassy ledges where the gentians grew. The sudden blaze of the sunset light was dazzling for a moment: I sat down on a slab of granite and took out the old Zeiss monocular that has seen so much in its time. Below and to the west lay a gently undulating plateau of granite, cut

In the lower Canyon the cliffs soar 3000 feet above the river.





The Pulpit Rock, at the Gate of the Nahanni, where the walls rise sheer from the water.

by streams into small valleys with low, easy divides. Beyond it lay a range of weirdly shaped mountains; fantastic and unreal they seemed, outlined against the setting sun. There was a slight weather haze that split the evening rays into a thousand particles, and in that golden glory of light I saw a strange thing—a great bay in the mountains and in that bay an isolated tower of rock so shaped that it looked like a black column of smoke, evil and menacing. Behind these mountains, and set back perhaps another ten or fifteen miles, a second range of serrated peaks showed faintly—the Yukon boundary, that must be; for the map was of little use to us here. "Mountainous country—unmapped," was all it had to say, and the Flat River ran through it as a dotted line. To the south west the plateau sloped up to a skyline, perhaps three miles away; and crossing that skyline the glass showed me two caribou alternately grazing and breaking into short, fast runs. They seemed to be worried about something. Wolves? Away down below lay the sleeping camp, set by its blue alpine lake among the last dwarf firs of timberline. Mountains lay to the east and to the north—but the light was fading now, and it was time to be getting down to the shelter of that little clump of firs. The great moment had gone and the glory was departed, leaving a memory that could never fade.

A few days later Curtis and I set out westwards over the plateau. We planned to go as far west as we could, getting back to camp by nightfall.

It was a fine country to travel over. Great stretches of it were open moorland. There were small valleys and meadows of good grazing for the string of packhorses we wished we had. Here and there were groups of small firs or willow, and over much of the country the dwarf "black birch" grew thinly: where it was thick we had another and more vivid name for it. The streams flowed, crystal clear, over sparkling granite gravel—and through all this ran the caribou trails, wide, easy to follow and beautifully engineered.

We lunched by a stream at the head of a sheltered pocket in the hills, and there we left the tea-pail and the outfit, all ready for supper, and pushed on. At a small lake, set amongst gentian, ragwort and grass of Parnassus, I stopped to change a film. Curtis passed on over a ridge and out of sight, and when I followed over that ridge there was only the great grey-green upland and no Curtis. Time went by—it was late afternoon now—and I perched

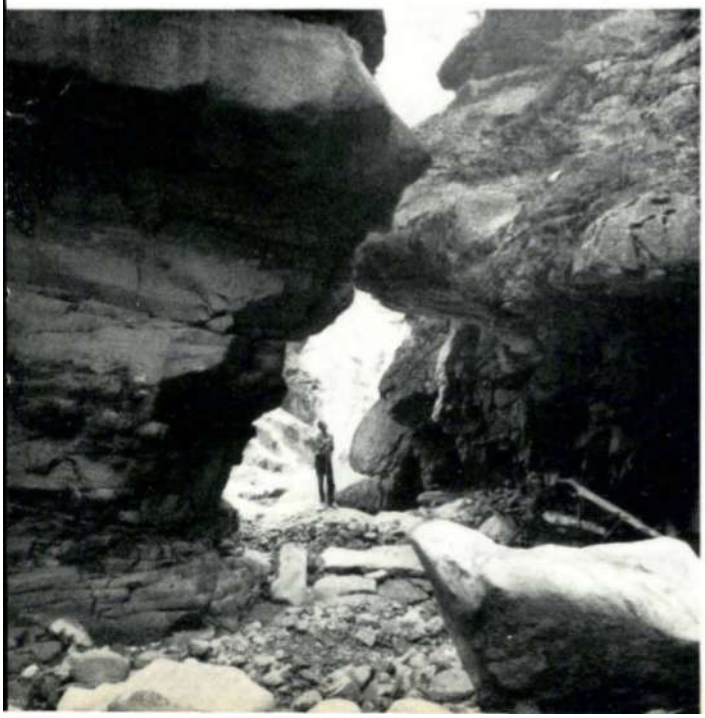
on a huge outcropping of granite and waited: to shout would have been a waste of time in that big, empty country. A sparrow twittering on a pebble. . . .

Finally he re-appeared, steaming up out of the valley that lay between us and the western range, and we made our last move forward—we knew now that we had reached the turning point. Across the new valley, and not too far away, lay the great coulee and the black tower. The coulee was cut across by a geological fault—and, now that it was unattainable, Curtis knew for a certainty that it held the lost Nahanni gold. Gold? That was nothing! Rubies, roc's eggs and the onyx stone—anything the heart might desire. Sadly we turned our backs on all these riches and headed back on the long trail to supper and on to camp.

A couple of days were spent at the Irvine Creek camp before we headed down the Flat. On one of these I went to the top of a cone-shaped mountain that lay to the northeast to get a panorama of pictures. A thunderstorm blacked the country out for me so I dropped down a thousand feet to the nearest trees, cut myself a shelter beneath an old fir, and made tea and ate some bannock and cheese. When the rain stopped I climbed up to the ridge again, but thunderstorms were still stalking over the surrounding country and it was not till 8 p.m. that I could get the pictures I wanted. I passed the time of waiting in watching, with the glass, a grizzly away up on the far slope of the little valley of the fir trees. He was digging out a marmot: the clods and rocks flew right and left, and presumably he got his marmot in the end, for he ambled off, most contentedly, up the mountainside, over a ridge and out of sight. It was a longish way back to camp, so in the end I got benighted for my pains, and put in a few hours of nightmarish slumber under a thick spreading spruce on the flats of Irvine Creek, huddled in an old shooting jacket with a small fire at my feet.

Meanwhile the others had taken the canoe up the Flat River, fishing and geologising. At Faille's old cabin site they came on a wonderful stand of raspberries, and were well stuck into this when Curtis heard a noise like a sneeze and Frank distinctly heard the hiss of a snake. They turned and looked towards each other and were surprised to see, right in line between them, a grizzly standing on his hind legs, equally surprised and looking from one to the other. The grizzly was the first to crack. He gave one more sneeze and then dropped on all fours and beat it out of the raspberry thicket. As he ran he bashed into a tall, slender, fire-killed spruce with his shoulder. The dry top whipped forward and snapped, and came down on his rump, and with a startled roar the bear bounded forward and disappeared. Taking it all round, things may be said to have gone off very smoothly on this occasion. The grizzly must have been asleep in the berry patch when Curtis and Frank got there, and it was just a piece of luck that neither of them walked right onto him.

"The Dry Canyon, a barren, shut-in world of water-worn stone, where no bird sang."



Down the jade-green water of the Flat River, down many a riffle, slid the canoe; and we came, in a couple of days, to the mouth of the Flat and to Faille's original cabin of 1927, where I had been the solitary guest at the house warming supper in that far off September. Where the Flat enters the Nahanni the former river is dead slow and the latter very fast. A quarter of a mile down the Nahanni, and on the same side as the Flat, the Raven's Riffle with its big, white capped waves lies in wait for the unwary. One must paddle out of the slack water and into the Nahanni current at top speed, and cross the Nahanni above the riffle, thus gaining the inside of the bend and the easier water. We came out of the Flat River a little short on speed, and for a brief space we enjoyed the exhilarating spectacle of the big waves of the Raven's Riffle from far too close as we lurched downstream to meet them, broadside on. But we straightened out just in time, slid through the edge of the rough water, and left the riffle booming under its cliff while we swept on down river in the wake of a swimming caribou.

For three days we camped at the Gate, that strange place of deep shadows and silent, eddying water. You can lie there on the moss and the blueberry bush, on the rim of the pillar of the Gate, and stretch out an arm and drop a stone sheer, almost a thousand feet, into the river.

An easy day's run brought us down through the Second Canyon and into Deadmen's Valley, and there we camped on the site of the cabin that Gordon Matthews and I had built for the winter of 1928-9. The same tall spruce looked down on the clearing—taller now, so that the midday sun barely reached that spot at all—but cabin and cache were gone. They had vanished so completely that it was hard even for me to say where they had been. The young spruce, the wild roses and the cranberries had taken over; and the creek, in some bygone flood, had swept away the dog house. Not one thing remained to mark the site except the stout top of our 4-ring, collapsible cookstove which lay there in the deep moss—mute and rusty souvenir of many a good feed.

But, if the buildings had vanished, our hunting trails, we found, were still plain and easy to travel—kept open

by the game. We followed the mountain trail to timberline under the spurs of the Tlogotsho Range; and we followed the river trail up into the snyes where some old, old cabins are hidden away, the work of Klondikers, perhaps. They are built of upright logs, and have fireplaces of clay and stone set in the centre of their floors. They stand amongst tall, black spruce from which hang long, venerable beards of grey-green moss. A sense of eld and of decay and of tragedy pervades that haunted spot. Nothing would induce me to camp there, and I have often wondered what fate overtook the builders of those cabins, and left behind that chill feeling of horror that comes over one there, even in the glittering sunlight of a winter's day.

We travelled up the Dry Canyon, into a barren, shut-in world of waterworn stone where no bird sang and no stream flowed to break the silence. We climbed the Little Butte at the outlet of Deadmen's Valley. From its crest we could size up the Cache Rapid which we had to run to pass from the Valley into the Lower Canyon, and we could turn and look back upstream to Second Canyon Mountain and the line of spruce on the north bank of the Nahanni where the Macleods were killed.

The Cache Rapid, or George's Riffle, found us at the parting of the ways. Curtis and Frank had decided to run it, with the big canoe, on the left. I was always a stickler for old established custom and, since I had been told that my old trail down the right bank of the riffle was now impossible owing to a recent rockfall from the canyon wall, I had decided to prove that it could still be done. Both parties planned to land, they on the island and I in the eddy behind the rockfall, and walk ahead and look the situation over.

We passed Ram Creek and the Little Butte, and shot past Starke's Rock and down the upper riffles in famous style. I was in the lead with our sixteen foot canoe, and I swung into the eddy behind the rockslide, turned upstream and looked around for the others. There they went, past the island and going at race horse speed! Curtis was shouting something, but the uproar of the Nahanni made hearing difficult. It sounded like "To hell with looking!" I saw the big canoe rise on a wave, and Frank, paddling bow, made a complete air stroke. They vanished down the hill of water into a turmoil of white . . . an exhilarating sight and I wouldn't have missed it for anything.

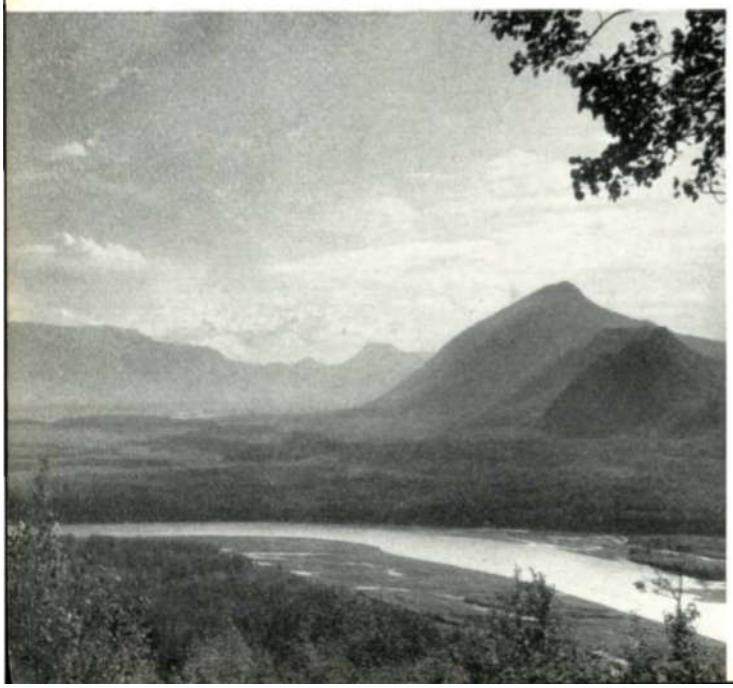
All right—to hell with looking! and I headed the little canoe downstream, close to shore. The pace quickened and all went well till a rock about the size of an average trapping cabin loomed up with the whole force of the Nahanni pouring over it. The channel between it and the shore was full of sharp rocks, so I swung out about forty-five degrees and missed the rock but caught the wash from it on the side. This had the effect of turning the little canoe broadside on to the Nahanni—a novel experience for me, and one that I can do without in future. This state of affairs lasted for three waves and three desperate heaves of the paddle. I had things straightened out in time for the big waves at the foot of the riffle and climbed into view of the others over a wave so big that, according to Curtis, I was hidden and only the bottom of the canoe was visible. "We were just coming up," he called out, "to pick up any stray limbs and any useful junk that might come floating down to us!"

Our next camp was halfway through the Lower Canyon. at the mouth of Patterson Creek, and from there we took a day and climbed up the creek gulch to the plateau that lies 4000 feet above the Nahanni. The Chinook wind was singing over those high prairies, quartz crystals glittered in the gravel beds, autumn had turned "the green, flower-starred upland" of my July 1928 diary* to its September browns and reds. And once again one was sad when "evening drove me down into the valley of the great stones, and from there into the trees of the sub-arctic forest, and so back to camp on the Nahanni." That was written in 1928. Listen a moment to 1951: "Hit out after breakfast up Patterson Cr. Strong S. W. wind. Took photos of creek gulch and the high plateau country. Saw two wolves. Home about 8.0 p.m." How one changes! The very same trip required two and a half closely written foolscap pages in 1928!

The Nahanni, too, is no longer young. The same stretch of the plateau was covered with sheep droppings in 1928: in 1951 there was not a sign of any kind except a very occasional old track. The wild game, from observation and from all reports, has been cut, in twenty-five years, to one third of its former plenty—probably even less. Various cycles of scarcity have probably coincided with an increased wolf population, better rifles in general use and a greater pressure from mankind. And the paw of the ape has been laid heavily on that lovely river. Much of the Splits country has been devastated by fire in recent years, and *all* of the Second Canyon—eight miles of the most magnificent river scenery wrecked—a desert of scarred and fire-blasted rock and scree. A shadowy place of moss-grown precipice and timbered flat it used to be, with stunted spruce and birch rooted in the clefts, growing from every ledge, adorning the islands. But we shall not

*See "The Beaver" June 1947. Page 9.

The South Nahanni cutting through the Outpost Hills.



Evening sunlight on the rock walls of the lower canyon.

see that again. Fireweed and ragwort and golden rod, the wild rose and the willow, are all at work building up humus for future trees. But not in our time.

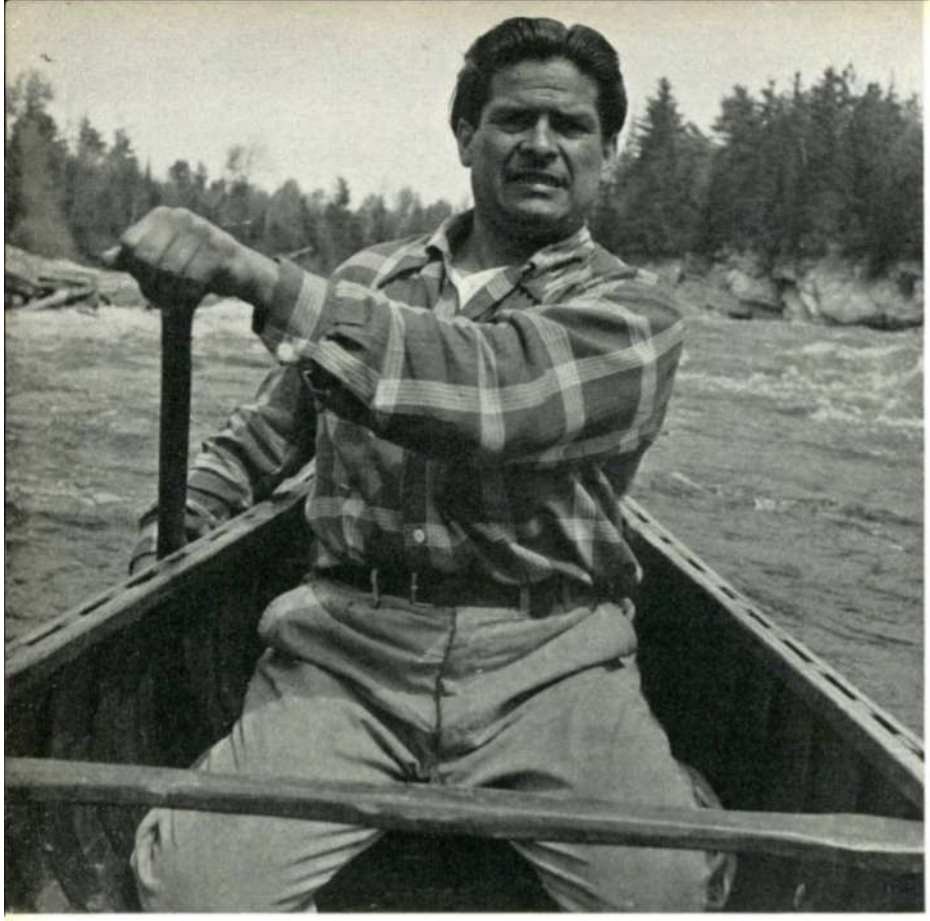
Homo sapiens, it seemed, had been trying to ascend the Nahanni that very summer, and his traces greeted us when we landed to make camp at the Twisted Mountain. Before this was possible Frank and I had to burn or heave into the river a collection of cartons, newspapers and tin cans that would have done credit to any National Park camp ground in the tourist season. Civilisation was evidently coming closer. . . .

And here we were, down on the Liard again, on the long trail south—and the Nahanni summer was over. The rush of the river under the nose of Cooper's scow was certainly very soothing. . . .

To the north the Mackenzie Mountains still marched by, shining in the moonlight. The Mountains of Youth they would always be for me: and when, I wondered sleepily, would I be seeing them again? Soon, I decided: and the sooner the better—there was not time for another twenty-four years to go by.

That moon was behaving in an extremely undignified manner. The stars, too—dancing—there could be no doubt about that, but one would have expected better things of the moon—

Inadvertently I closed one eye—and then the other. . . •

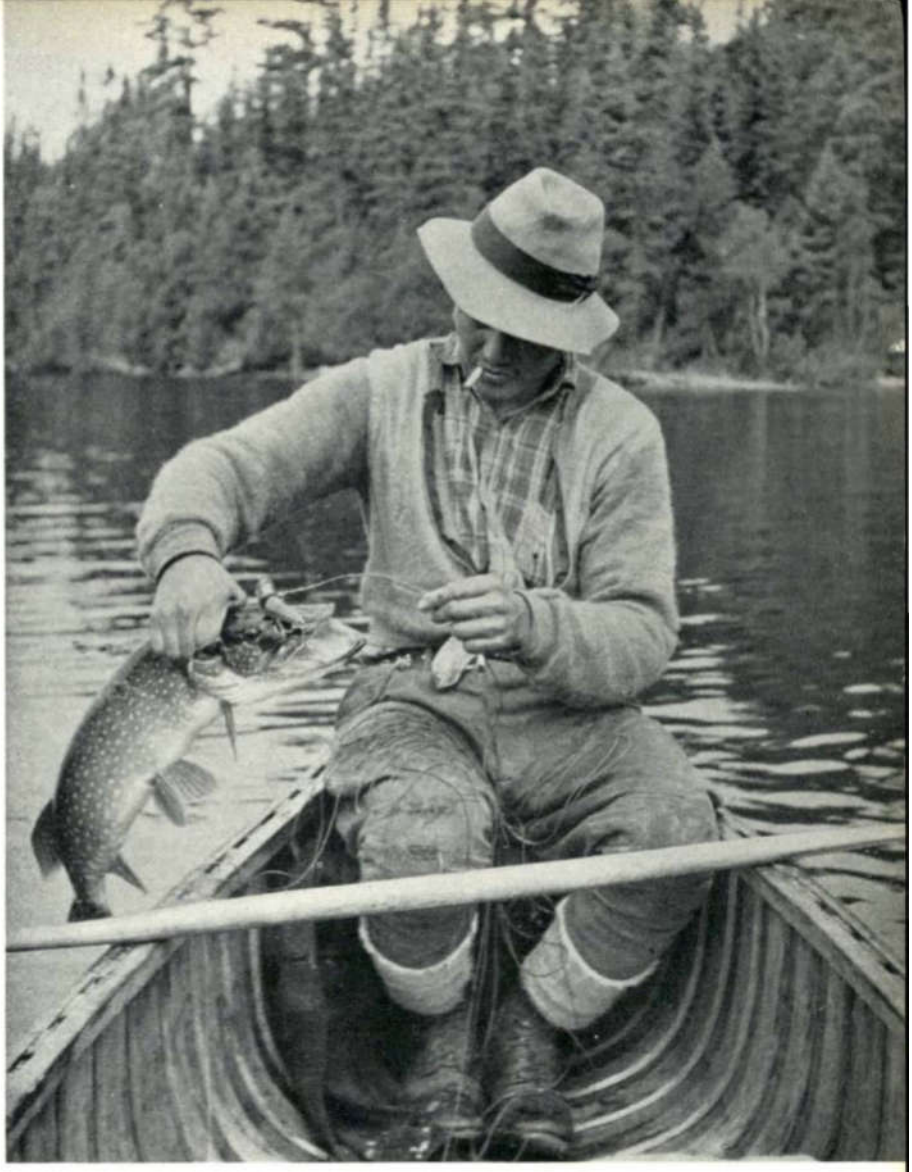


Indian Guides

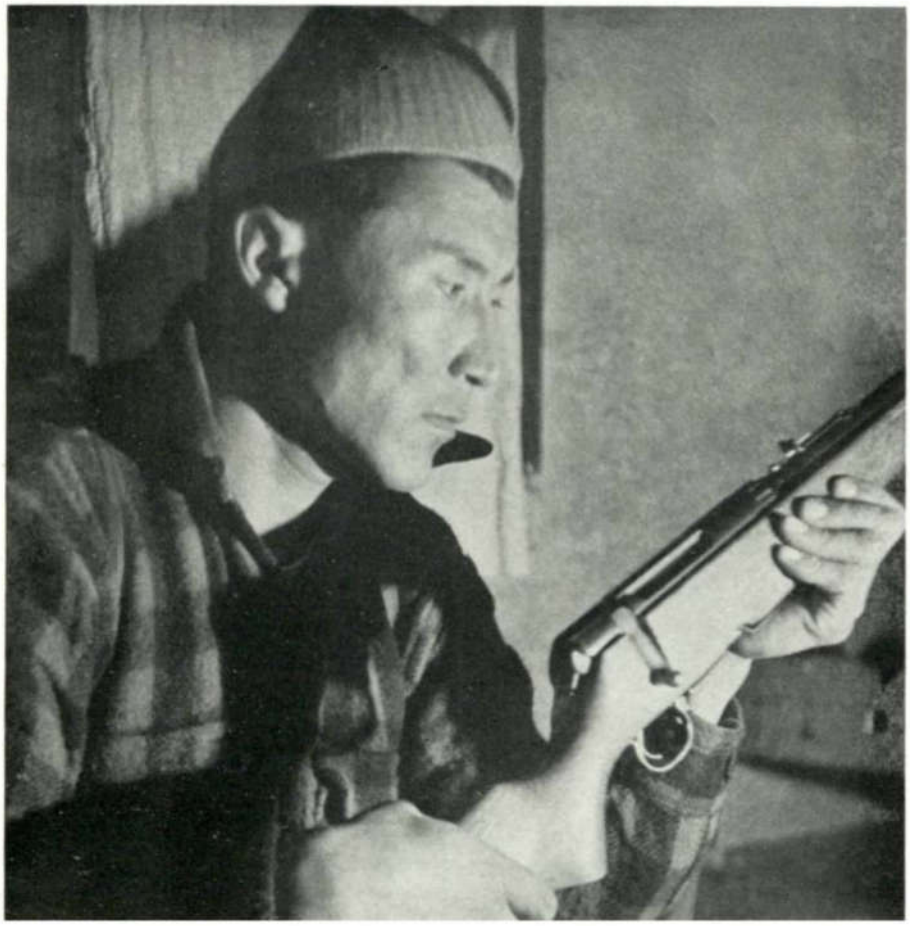
Words and Pictures
by Stephen Greenlees

ALGONKIN Arthur Smith is a canoeman with the skill which only the Indian of a white-water district ever acquires. In the valleys of the upper Ottawa, the Gatineau and the Lièvre Rivers, in the isolated hinterland of the Laurentian Range in western Quebec, Smith often runs rapids which would intimidate even the average bush Indian. I know, because I used Arthur as the principal character in a photo story about Indians running the rapids. Next time I met him was some months later, in the lobby of a motion picture theatre which features Westerns, in the town of Maniwaki, Quebec. Arthur and I talked about this and that for a while and then I asked him if he was coming in to see the picture. "No," Arthur said, "I'm just waiting here for a friend of mine. I don't like Westerns anyway. Makes me nervous the way those actors take chances, riding bucking horses and all that stuff." I didn't comment on this, but I thought of the way Arthur Smith rode through roaring rapids with his frail canoe bucking under him more dangerously than any bronco—and no dry land, but only seething breakers beneath him.

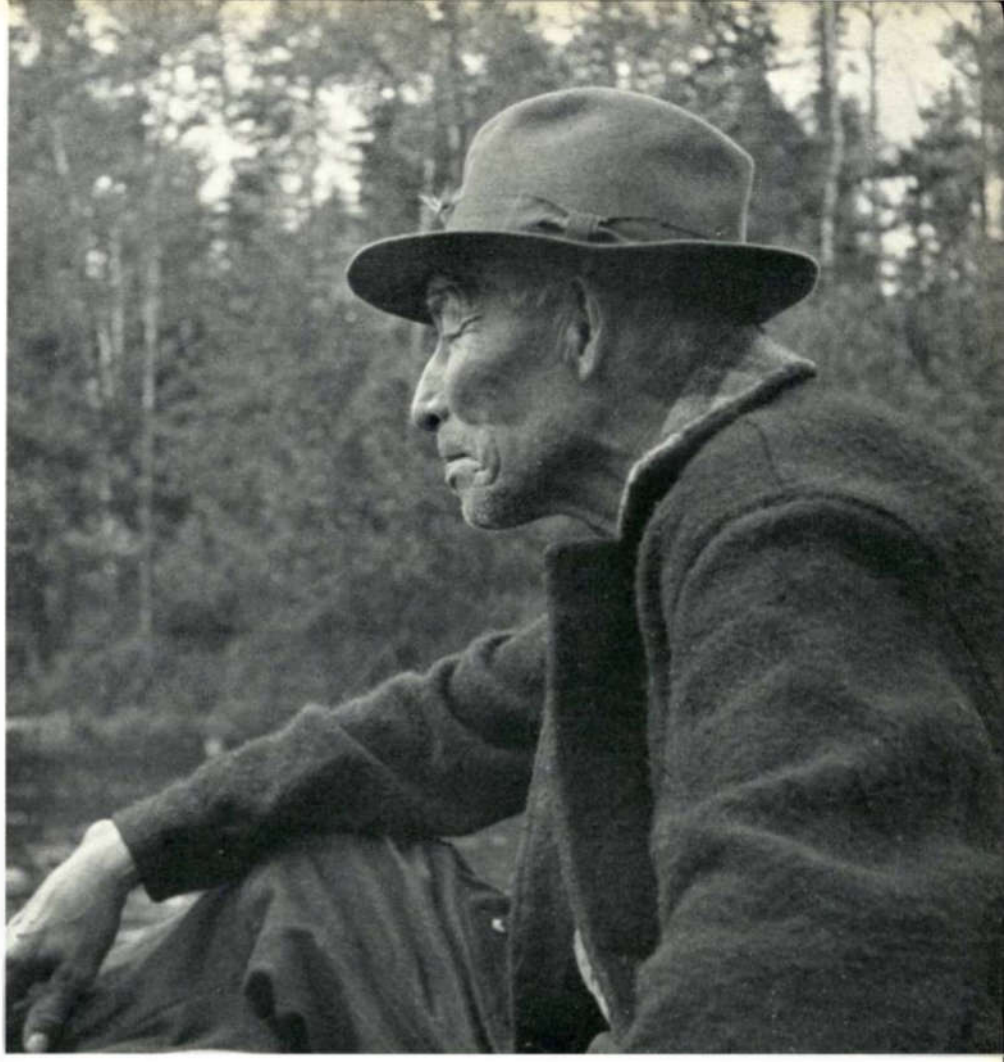
THE sportsman who has the good fortune to hunt, fish or travel with a bush-trained Indian guide can learn more in a week from his native companion than he could absorb from books in a long winter of fireside reading. The newcomer from civilization must keep an open eye and an open mind, and discount some of his preconceived ideas about woodcraft and the wilderness life. He will quickly pick up from his guide such useful tricks as how to build a fire in pouring rain by using the right wood the right way, or how to tell the difference between unseen ruffed grouse and spruce partridge by the sound of the wing beats. In the course of a long acquaintance with native guides across the north country I remember the best men very clearly. Four of them, shown here, are from four different tribes. These Indians are all wonderfully adept at the rugged life of their wilderness environment.



TETE DE BOULE tribesman Pienne Ottawa is a true aboriginal fisherman and hunter, inheritor of his savage progenitors' ability in tracking game and luring big fish to the hook. His country is the headwaters territory of the Saint Maurice River in Quebec Province, far enough north to be remote from civilization, far enough south to have plenty of moose, and deer, and bear, trout and pike. His first name is really Pierre, but his fellow-tribesmen have transmuted the sound to "Pienne." From him I first learned to use the portager's tumpline correctly, to judge the time-lapse between the departure of a moose and the discovery of its tracks by the amount of sap still oozing out of the severed stems of leaves which the animal had nibbled, and various other bits of woods lore. Pienne, when he is hunting, tries to think in the same way the moose or the bear is thinking, and when he fishes he knows where a pike would go to find the minnows it must get to live. Consequently Pienne is very seldom without meat or fish in comfortable variety and quantity—which adds greatly to his value as a travelling companion.



CREE Indian George Michel is a trapper in the "Land of Little Sticks," where the spruce forests of northern Manitoba grow stunted as they dwindle into the treeless tundra of the Barrens. Michel was one of the dog drivers and hunters who guided our motion picture crew on location for a film about the caribou herds. He is a prime example of why the Indian has survived in the inhospitable north. Of extraordinary strength and endurance, this husky Cree can jog alongside his dog train all day and then, finding caribou towards evening, run hard for two miles or more around a hill to come upon the animals unaware—and still be steady enough to shoot and kill from two hundred yards. Moreover—and here is the supreme qualification for existing on the fringe of the Barrens—Michel can do all this with perfect good humour, and shrug the whole thing off good-temperedly if the caribou happen to move out of range while he stalks them.



OJIBWA Antoine Wigwam is an old-timer at wilderness living. I don't think any white man's friendliness ever received a real response from this impassive, aloof tribesman. On a movie-making trip to Lake Nipigon we hired Antoine as one of our guides because he was supposed to know the country. It turned out that he knew every bay in the big lake, every little lake behind the coast, every portage, every creek and every fishing hole. At the age of seventy the sleepy old Indian could still carry heavier loads than the white men on the portages. He could paddle faster, and he pointed out birds and animals which the whites would never have noticed otherwise. I thought that his superiority in the wilderness was the reason for his slightly disdainful attitude towards us, until one day Antoine made a few remarks which revealed his real point of view. Dog tired, we were taking a much-needed rest half-way along a rocky, uphill portage trail. Antoine looked over at me in a sardonic way, took his pipe out of his mouth and broke his customary silence to say, "You fellows are crazy for sure. If I was white man, lucky enough to live easy life in city, I have enough sense to stay there. But no, you come way out here, work hard, get wet in rain, eat poor grub, sleep on hard ground, just to take pictures." The old man shook his head. "You got no sense at all," he declared, the look of disdain coming strong over his swarthy face. ◆

Adventures of the Marquis

The S.S. "Marquis," largest vessel ever to navigate the Saskatchewan, had a short but lively career.

by Agnes Medd

THE hull of the sternwheeler *Marquis*, designed for Saskatchewan waters, was built by the Hudson's Bay Company at the foot of Bannatyne Street in Winnipeg during the spring of 1882. Peter McArthur was manager of the Company's department of inland navigation at the time. Orders now called for the transfer of the *Marquis*, the *Northwest* and the *Manitoba* to the Saskatchewan River. This job required careful planning as the boats were not designed for rough waves which are frequently met with in Lake Winnipeg, and besides the Grand Rapids of the Saskatchewan was a formidable obstacle with a total fall of nearly 45 feet.

After encountering and overcoming many difficulties and suffering a few minor mishaps, the boats with their machinery on board were successfully navigated across the big lake and warped up the rapids. This latter job was done by means of the boat's capstan hauling on a 3-inch, 1000-foot cable, aided by the stern wheel. At Cross Lake Landing the upper works of the *Marquis* were completed and when all was finished everyone was invited for a trial cruise on the calm and turquoise waters of Cross Lake; then the boat was loaded for Fort Edmonton.

This was the largest and most luxuriously furnished boat so far seen or ever likely to be seen on the capricious Saskatchewan River. Designed by a noted St. Louis builder, she was modeled after the latest type of Missouri craft. She was 202 feet long, had 4 foot draught, hull white oak, upper works white pine, powered with the most up to date machinery and lavishly equipped with carpets, piano, mirrors silverware and so forth; she had everything except a draught adapted to the river she was built to navigate.

Three years later the big sternwheeler did yeoman service transporting troops and supplies during the Northwest Rebellion. Early in May 1885 she brought a force of twenty-five mounted policemen from Prince Albert to the Hudson's Bay Ferry, then steamed up-river for Batoche in company with the smaller *Northcote*. On the way up, the steering gear of the *Marquis* was damaged, and the other boat had to take her in tow. They arrived at Batoche just after it had fallen to the Queen's troops. At the close of the campaign the troops were sent down the river on the steamers to the head of the Grand Rapids, most of the officers including General Middleton, travelling on the *Marquis*.

In August of 1886, the *Marquis* struck and foundered on an eight foot boulder in Tobin's Rapids, and the underwriters contracted with Peter McArthur for the sum of $20,000 to repair the damage. Quickly and carefully selecting thirty-five men and all equipment except timbers he teamed his outfit from Qu'Appelle station to Prince Albert and from there descended the river by means of scows to the scene of the wreck. The river had fallen so that the men could work dry-shod. The first task was to remove the boulder, which Jim Young the quarryman efficiently accomplished. Then the vessel was jacked up and hauled on slipways to a bench 30 feet above water level out of reach of possible ice jams and spring floods. Horse capstans and rope falls were used for this work. When the boat was just about in the desired position, trouble struck.

There were ten sets of tackle under strain and the foreman had an idea that the bow line was dangerously taut, so he eased it off a bit. The number two line took the added strain and snapped and in no time they all snapped.

The hulk of the "Marquis" as it appeared at Prince Albert over fifty years ago.
A. N. Mouat

With a roar and a crash the great boat went hurtling down to the river bed, all at work fleeing before her onslaught. Six weeks labour lost, but no lives. The boat was now a sorry wreck and the worst of it was that the main steam pipe was broken and the hog-chains also. Jacking up was begun immediately and when the *Marquis* was in a position of safety she was left there for the winter.

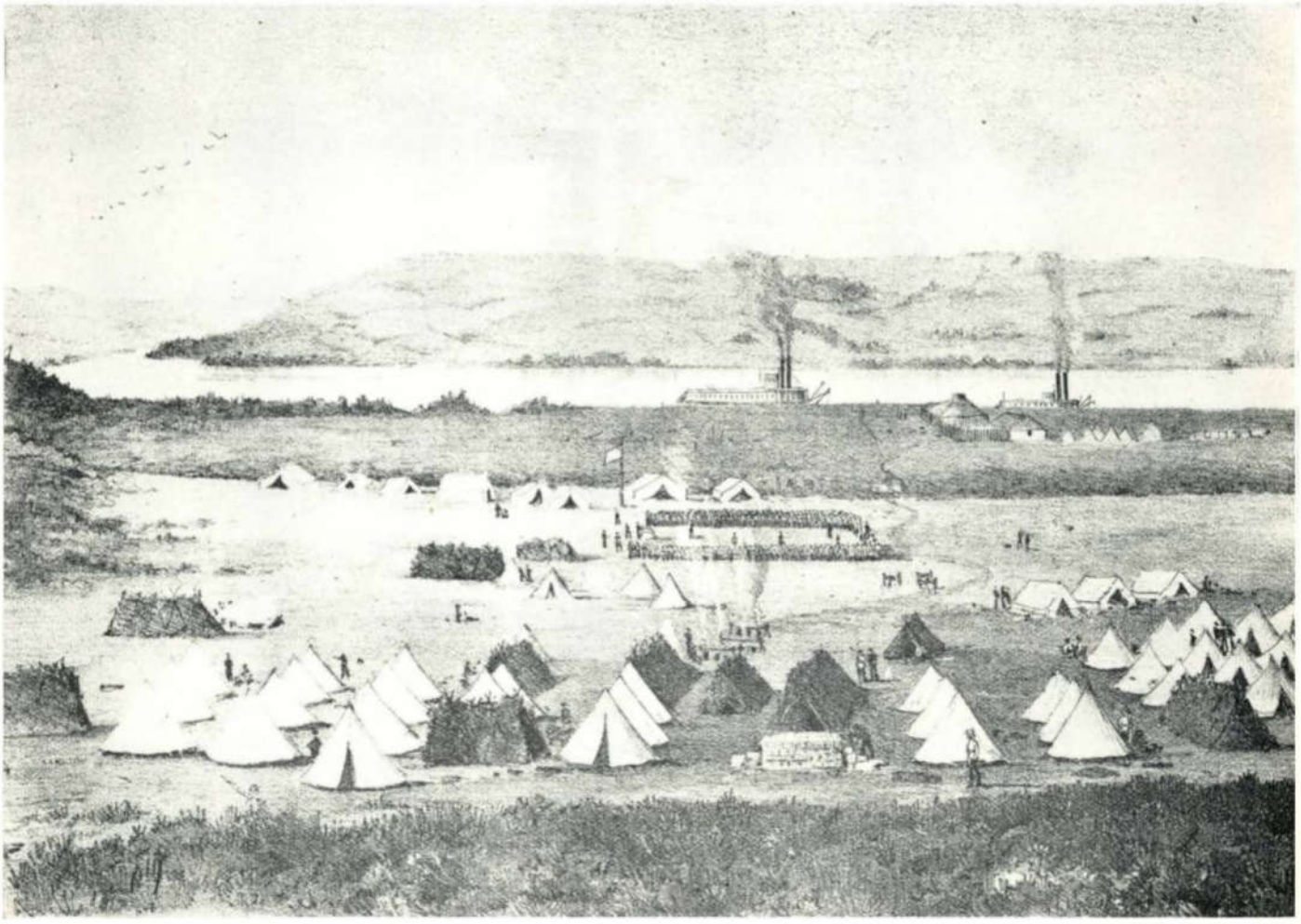
Next spring a picked crew of ten men returned to launch the boat and among them a noted blacksmith, a Glasgow man, Geordie Lumsden by name, who brazed the fractured steam pipe and repaired the hog-chains; but there was one truss-rod he could not weld. After many attempts and as many failures Geordie proposed that the truss-rod be taken to Prince Albert, pointing out that the machine shop there had a much larger forge. The situation now was serious; the truss-rod was an iron bar 42 feet long and 2 inches in diameter, and weighing about 700 pounds. Without this rod the vessel was unfit to navigate, and the insurance inspector was due any day to pass the work. So the blacksmith took the broken rod up the river many weary miles in a clumsy rowboat to Prince Albert. There the local blacksmith made the weld, but in carrying the rod down to the boat, it broke in two.

Geordie was disappointed but not in despair, for something had been learned at the Prince Albert shop. With care he rigged up supports, built up his fire, instructed his helpers and watched for the moment when the join would be hot enough. The moment approached, Geordie Lumsden struck three hearty blows with the sledge, followed up, and the thing was done. An excellent weld it was. All hands cheered, and then sat down to dinner in the dining saloon. While at dinner a whistle surprised everyone; presently a small steamer drew alongside and the underwriter's inspector together with the owner's crew came aboard.

The inspector with no delay passed the work, the owner's crew took charge and that evening the salvage crew found themselves happily installed as passengers on the boat they knew so well, bound for Winnipeg, via Grand Rapids.

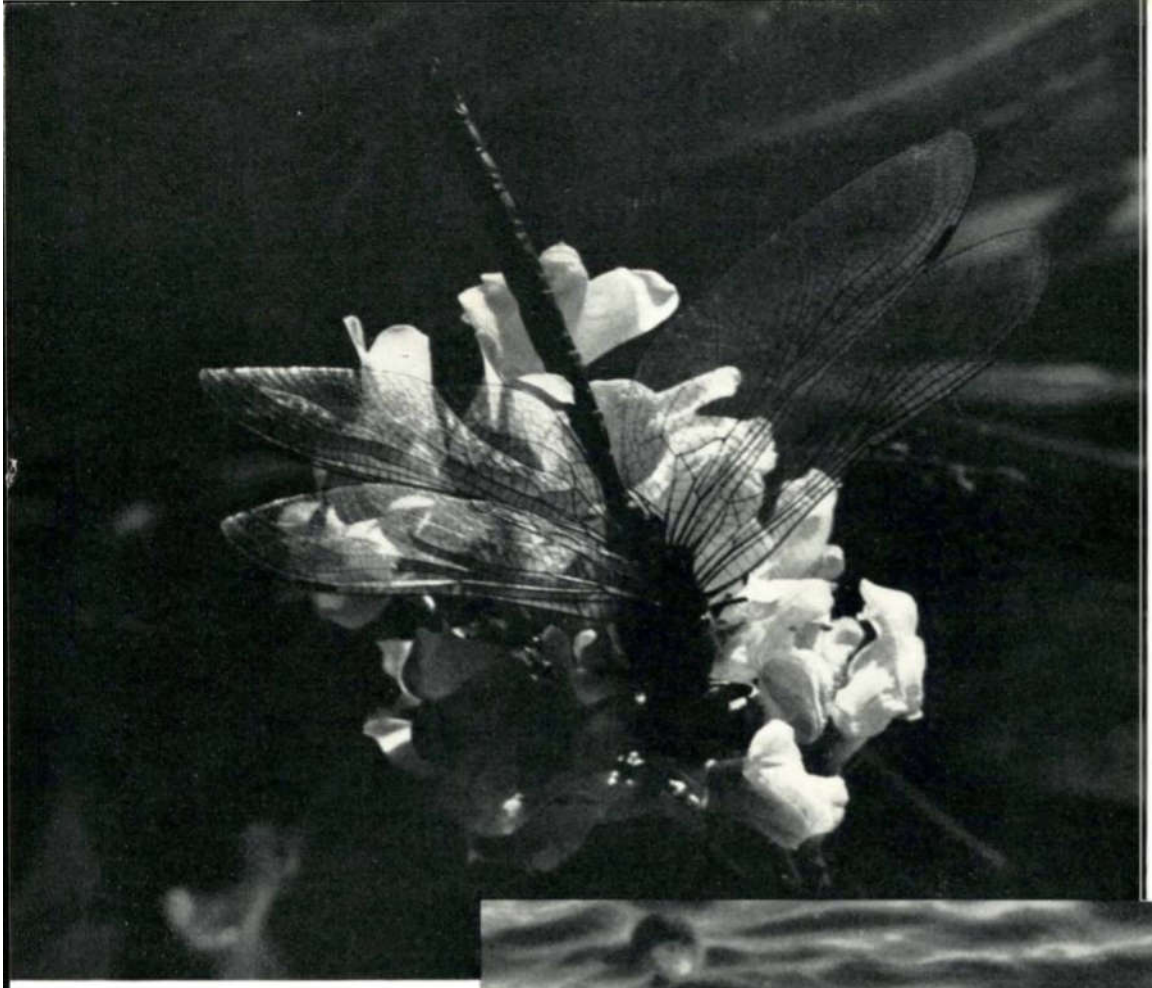
Not long afterwards, however, the *Marquis* was deemed unsuitable for the Saskatchewan, and was beached for good at Prince Albert. ◆

This sketch of the church parade at Fort Pitt on June 2nd, 1885, shows the relative sizes of the "Marquis" (left) and the "Northcote."

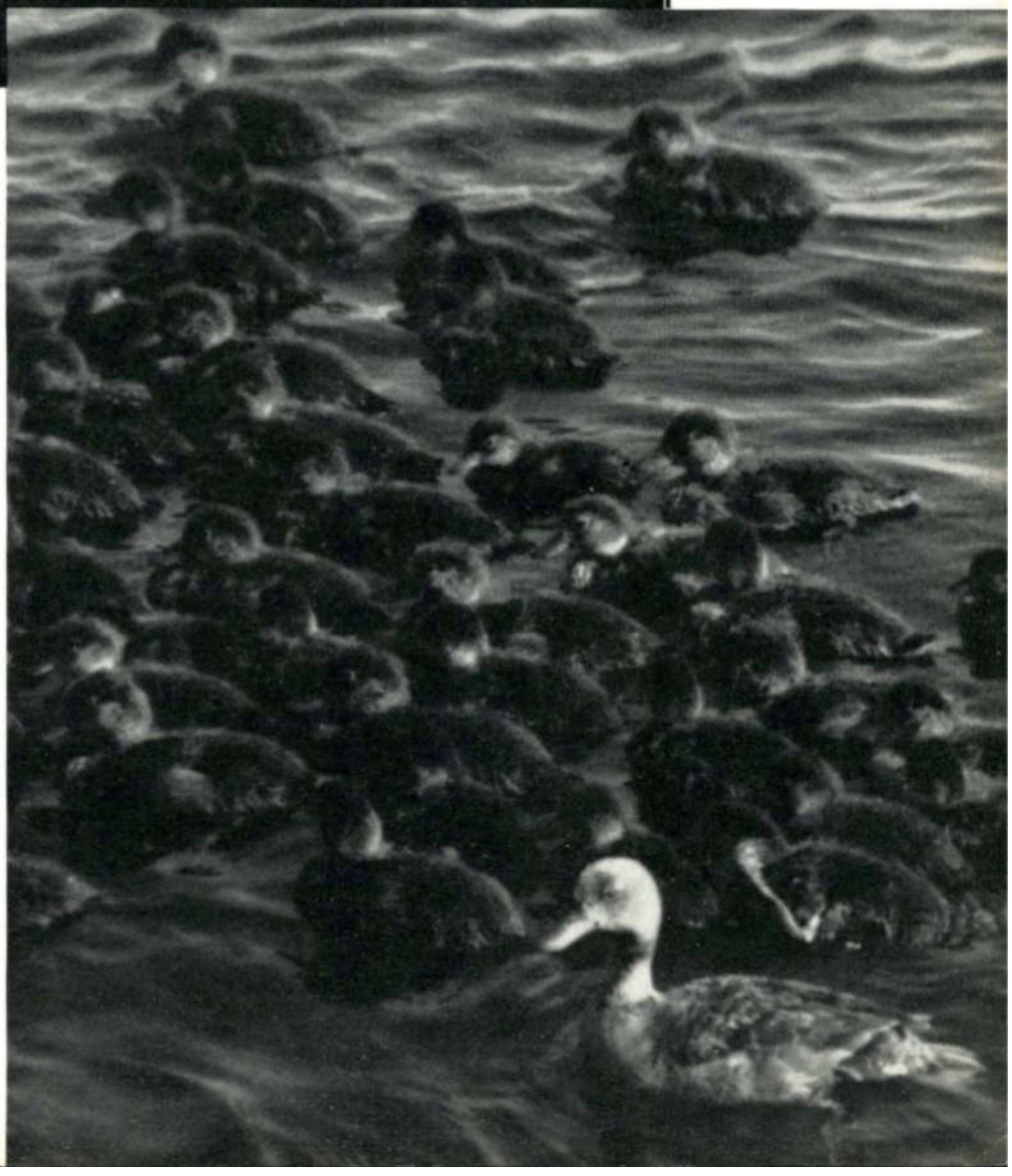


Northern Gallery

The Underdog. Father Rene Le-Major, O.M.I.



Insect Beauty.
Ted Tadda



Ducks Unlimited.
Lorene Squire

LIFE AT LACHINE

by A. C. Anderson

Introduction by Madge Wolfenden

The disciplined life of the fur traders at Lachine near Montreal was sometimes enlivened by bouts of gaiety reminiscent of the Beaver Club.

THE following fragment, apparently the introduction to an autobiography which was probably started about the year 1878 or thereabouts, and never finished, was written by Alexander Caulfield Anderson of the Hudson's Bay Company. Son of a former British army officer, Robert Anderson, he had been born on an indigo plantation in India, where his father was in partnership with a Mr. Alexander Caulfield. In his original contract with the company, which he joined in 1831, he is described as of West Ham, Essex. He sailed for Montreal in April 1831, in the ship *British Sovereign*, and was, upon reaching his destination, posted to Lachine House.

Although commencing his career in the eastern quarter of this country, he belongs definitely to the West, for after a period of one year at Lachine, he was transferred to the Columbia Department of the Company, headquarters of which was, at that time, Fort Vancouver on the Columbia river. The rest of his life was spent at the various forts on the coast, in New Caledonia (Simon Fraser's name for north central British Columbia), and at Forts Alexandria and Colvile. From time to time he travelled with the brigades across country to York Factory, and on shorter expeditions within his district, while the northern sea coast of present British Columbia and Alaska was well-known to him by virtue of his journeys in sailing ship and steamer to the Company's outlying posts in those remote regions.

In 1846, Anderson received his commission as Chief Trader, and in that year and the next he undertook to find a new route for the brigades, which would lie completely in British territory, should the 49th parallel of latitude be adopted as the boundary line between British possessions and the United States. His recommendation of a trail through the Similkameen district was accepted with certain modifications, and became the forerunner of the Hope-Princeton highway of to-day.

After his retirement in 1854, Anderson settled on a farm at Cathlamet in Washington Territory, near the home of James Birnie whose daughter Eliza he had married in 1838. After a period of four years he removed to Vancouver Island, where he purchased acreage at north Saanich, naming his estate "Rosebank." At Rosebank he passed the rest of his life.

Anderson became the first collector of Customs and postmaster for Vancouver Island at Victoria from 1858 to 1859, and in 1876 received from the Dominion Government the appointment of Indian Land Commissioner in British Columbia. He was also at the same time appointed Dominion Inspector of Fisheries, which position he held until his death in 1884.

As well as being a conscientious fur trader, he was an observant naturalist, and a dauntless explorer. In the year 1872 he won the Colonial government's prize for an essay on British Columbia, published as *The Dominion at the West*, a most creditable publication for the times. Another publication, *Hand-Book and Map to the Gold Region of Frazer's and Thompson's Rivers* (San Francisco, 1858) is also sought for by collectors of early British Columbia items.

The original journals of Anderson's 1846-47 explorations, his original map of British Columbia (1867), one or two water-colour sketches, a few letters and other fragmentary writings are to be found in the Provincial Archives of British Columbia, at Victoria. His *History of the North-west Coast* which he wrote in 1878 for H. H. Bancroft, the American historian, is to be found at the University of California at Berkeley, in its original form.

From reading Anderson's compositions one regrets that the contemplated autobiography came to nothing, for the author had had an interesting and eventful career, was a keen observer of men and events, and possessed the talents with which to make his story live.

In 1834, at Fort McLoughlin on the coast of British Columbia, W. F. Tolmie made his acquaintance for the first time, and under the entry of January 2, Tolmie has this to say of the new-found friend:

". . . altho' our acquaintance has only been of ten days duration feel considerable regret in parting with Anderson tho' rather hasty *'tis said* I have found him a frank, open hearted young man well educated & of good abilities."

H. H. Bancroft thus describes him in 1878:

"But more than to any other in Victoria, I feel myself indebted to Mr. A. C. Anderson, a man not only of fine education, but of marked literary ability. Of poetic temperament, chivalrous in thought as well as in carriage, of acute observation and retentive memory, he proved to be the chief and standard authority on all matters relating to the country. He had published several works of value and interest, and was universally regarded as the most valuable living witness of the past. Tall, symmetrical, and very erect, with a long narrow face, ample forehead, well brushed white hair, side whiskers, and keen, light-blue eyes, he looked the scholar he was. Scarcely allowing himself an interruption, he devoted nearly two weeks to my work with such warm cheerfulness and gentlemanly courtesy as to win our hearts. Besides this, he brought me much valuable material in the form of record books and letters. . . ."

The following notes on some of the people and places mentioned in the autobiography may be found useful:

Hainault Forest, which existed up to about a century ago, was in Essex, southeast of Epping Forest.

John Clarke and *Alexander Stewart* were both former Northwesters who had served in the Far West.

A *calèche* is a one-seated, two-wheeled vehicle, still to be seen in Quebec City as a tourist attraction.

Fort Coulonge was at the junction of the Coulonge River with the Ottawa.

James Keith was a Scot who entered the service of the North West Company early in the 19th century, and became a partner in 1814, at the age of thirty. On the union of that company with the H B C he was appointed a chief factor. In 1827 he was placed in charge of the Company's affairs at Lachine where he served almost continuously until 1843. His wife was a sister of Lady Simpson.

Alexander Simpson was a cousin of Sir George's, and brother to Thomas, the Arctic explorer, whose *Life and Travels* he wrote.

Alexander Caulfield Anderson, author of these reminiscences. B.C. Archives.

I WAS born in Calcutta in the year 1814, reaching England in company with my parents and my two elder brothers, when I was three years old. Thenceforward we resided within easy distance of the metropolis [London], near the border of Hainault Forest, until it was time to select a profession for my future years. A cadetship in the East—the arena in which most of my relatives of the contemporary generation have since figured—was at one time contemplated; but my fancy lay not thitherward. Like others of my age I had read some of Mr. [James Fenimore] Cooper's novels, and, emulous of his heroes, I longed for a life of adventure in the, to me, mysterious wilderness of the West. My yearning, already sufficiently excited, received afterwards a fresh impulse. I met at a dinner-party two veteran Chief Factors of the Hudson's Bay Company, at home on furlough—John Clarke and Alexander Stewart. Stirring anecdotes of adventure by flood and field filled my attentive ears, and confirmed the desire, if indeed it had ever wavered, that I had formed in favor of the West. To be brief, it was decided that I should join the Hudson's Bay Company, in which service I was duly accepted as an "Apprentice Clerk"—the primary step towards future advancement.

I was not, however, to rush into the wilderness without some slight knowledge of the world I was about to leave behind me, for previously to this my father had placed me for a while in the office of a friend, a merchant in London. In this capacity if I acquired but a modicum of the solid lore necessary to the formation of a future Baring, I at least got a useful insight into the arcana of metropolitan life, and became sufficiently imbued with Cockney usages to enable me in after years to appreciate the humours of Mr Samuel Weller and Sarah Gamp—no small boon to a recluse.

With then (as it has proved), an iron constitution, a well-stored kit, a splendid gun, and I dare say a very good opinion of myself, behold me fairly embarked upon my chosen career. I was appointed to Lachine, a station some nine miles distant from Montreal, my brother*, two years my senior in age, who entered the service at the same time, proceeding to Moose Factory in Hudson's Bay. We separated in London, and by the chance of our subsequent appointments never met again, though continuing to advance almost *pari passu* in the service.

Montreal at the date of my arrival there in the spring of 1831, did not present the many architectural beauties for which it has since become noted among the towns of America. There were few fine buildings besides the great Cathedral [Notre Dame]; the streets were for the most part old-fashioned and narrow; and the fine wharves which have since been constructed were then only about to be commenced. The sordid beach upon which landing was effected reeked with pollution, and crowds of sad and sickly immigrants, chiefly from Ireland, were squatted under rude shelters wherever a "coign of vantage" presented itself. Gradually afterwards these poor people moved away towards the upper country as opportunity occurred. There, doubtless, where there was a wide field for industry, their condition speedily improved; but seeing them as I did, inert, suffering from want and sickness, and apparently uncared for by any, their position struck me as almost hopelessly forlorn. Altogether my first impressions of Montreal were not of the most pleasant nature, and I

*The late Chief Factor James Anderson, afterwards known to the public through his able conduct of the canoe-expedition in quest of Franklin in 1855.—*A.C.A.*

was glad soon after disembarking to get away towards my destined place of sojourn. This, by the aid of a lumbering calèche, drawn by a sturdy and fast-trotting Canadian pony, I soon reached, and became duly installed an inmate of the establishment which was to be my home for the succeeding year.

Lachine House, as our domicile was called, was pleasantly seated in the village of the same name, situated at the head of certain rapids which impede the navigation of the Saint Lawrence between that point and Montreal; a large and somewhat pretentious-looking wooden building, near which were situated stables and other offices with stone houses and sheds for canoes. This point in earlier times had been a very important station of the North West Company, before its coalition with their opponents of Hudson's Bay. Hence large fleets of canoes were despatched every Spring on their way to the head of Lake Superior, the point of rendezvous where the magnates of the interior annually assembled, and where all the arrangements for the ensuing year were effected. But at the period of which I write, much of the glory of Lachine had departed. Half a dozen canoes of the largest size served to convey the Canadian recruits intended for the remote interior and for the passage of retiring winterers on their return. The rest of the canoe transport was confined to the supply of Fort Coulonge and other posts situated upon the Ottawa or its tributaries, and upon the St. Maurice flowing into the St. Lawrence at Three Rivers. The occasional arrival or departure, however, of these little squadrons, or, as they were termed "brigades," was a cheering sight, and seemed to enliven the monotony of our ordinary routine.

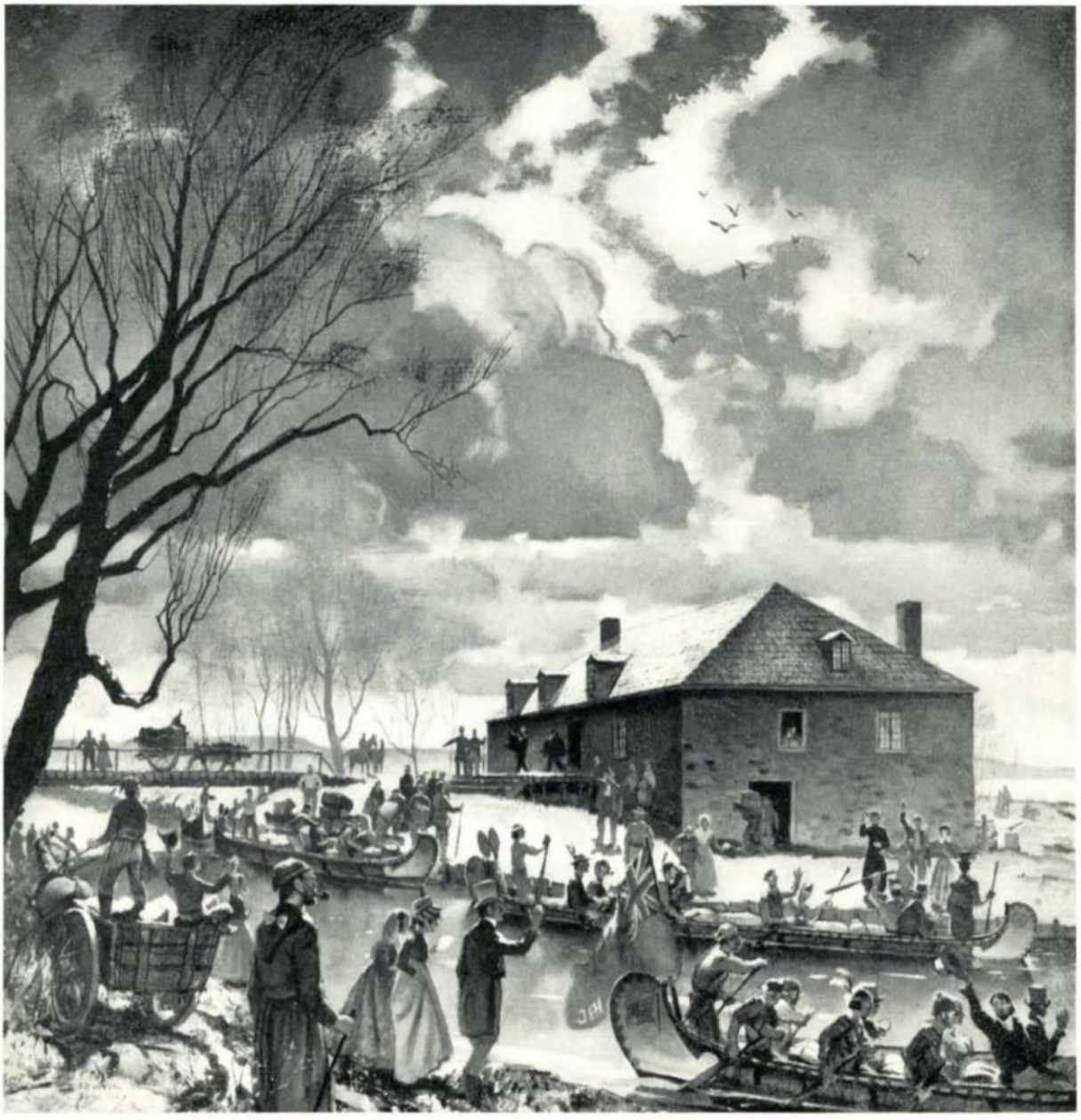
The establishment at Lachine was conducted on a very liberal scale in as far as our personal comforts were concerned, but, I need scarcely say, the romantic visions I had indulged in under the tuition of Mr. Cooper's seductive novels were not destined to be realized, at least in this particular portion of the great continent.

I found that we had plenty of hard desk-work to attend to, and this generally of a very prosaic description. The Company had just concluded the purchase from the original lessees of certain privileges of trade upon the Crown Lands called the King's Posts bordering the Saint Lawrence below Quebec. Innumerable documents had to be copied and recopied; vast webs of legal phraseology, combining English obscurities with scraps of antiquated French, the relics of charters and proclamations dating back beyond the era of the Grand Monarque [Louis XIV]. Verily I was at times tempted to regret the quiet humdrum of my desk in Leadenhall Street. But all this was doubtless excellent training for a youngster, and our worthy privileged principal was evidently bent on giving his subordinates the full benefit of the opportunity. Mr. James Keith, the gentleman in question, was one of the Senior Chief Factors of the Service, a man, still in the prime of life, who had previously seen much of the interior, and who, having amassed a very considerable fortune, now began to ponder about retirement. His position at Lachine, however, and the corresponding consequence in the world of Montreal which it entailed, seemed to be too congenial to render probable any precipitate step of this kind, and so he plodded on, comfortably exercising his responsible duties and very generally and deservedly respected. Alexander Simpson and John McKenzie, my two concurrent "slaves of the Lamp," I being of all the junior, were two well-educated young Scotsmen, in all the freshness of their native hills*. Thus was composed our *partie carrée*; and never, I suppose did four men, outwardly staid and decorous individuals, seat themselves [more?] regularly round a table; for our Chief Factor was the embodiment of regularity, almost to a caricature. Seated at dinner, a glass of Madeira invariably followed the soup, of Port accompanied the pudding, and so we regularly hob-nobbed. In the winter evenings, commencing at a stated date [time?], and terminating alike by rule, a single rubber of whist, never by any chance exceeded, played for sixpenny points, was the standard regulation. Altogether, if example alone could have influenced definitively our characters, we must have become in time models of precision, staid types of that method in action which I fear, at least as regards myself, has never been developed.

But occasionally, at rare intervals this quiet monotony would be broken. The genius of hospitality would quietly give a jog, and all the dormant sympathies of our Commander's nature would awaken. Then Mary and Peggy, our two antiquated serving maids (for anything in the shape of a smart ribbon or a comely physiognomy was excluded under the rigid discipline of Lachine House) had their own troubles of preparation. A banquet of baronial proportions was decreed—Buffalo tongues and humps from the remote interior, the muf[f]les of Moose-deer, the tails of Beaver, and barbaric delicacies of all kinds, were to be operated on, mingled with the varying civilized cates [choice food stuffs] that the markets of Montreal could furnish. Dâå-niel, the serving man (for Mr. Keith, though not habitually, in some words favoured the broad accentuation of his father-land) would be driven almost to despair by the multifarious calls upon his attention, and every thing for a while would be in comparative disorder. Then mingled with some of the *élite* of Montreal, would congregate veteran North-Westers whose names, once familiar as household words, are now remembered only in connexion with the history of the past; referred to in some dispute of national boundary; or recalled by those whose interest in the bygone of the North West is traditional.

Staid and decorous, as of wont, was the outset of these occasional symposia; but soon the ice would melt, the flood of fun which underlay the host's hard exterior would be loosened, and as if by magic a change ensued, by contrast the most amusing. Flashes of humour, quaintly-told anecdotes of travelling experience, and all the varied stores of a tenacious memory enlivened the usually quiet board, eliciting from the other veterans of the wilderness a flood of similar reminiscence. Barbarous sounds, the names of native chiefs or of remote localities, which if since familiar were at that time strange to me, broke on the ear with almost mysterious significance & then when the cloth was

*The first, some years subsequently was appointed to conduct the Company's affairs at the Sandwich Islands, where he acted for a while as Consul. He died, I believe, recently in Scotland. McKenzie still continues, I think, in the Service, in which he attained the rank of Chief Factor. —*A.C.A.*



Express and freight canoes leaving Lachine for the West. From the painting by Franklin Arbuckle.

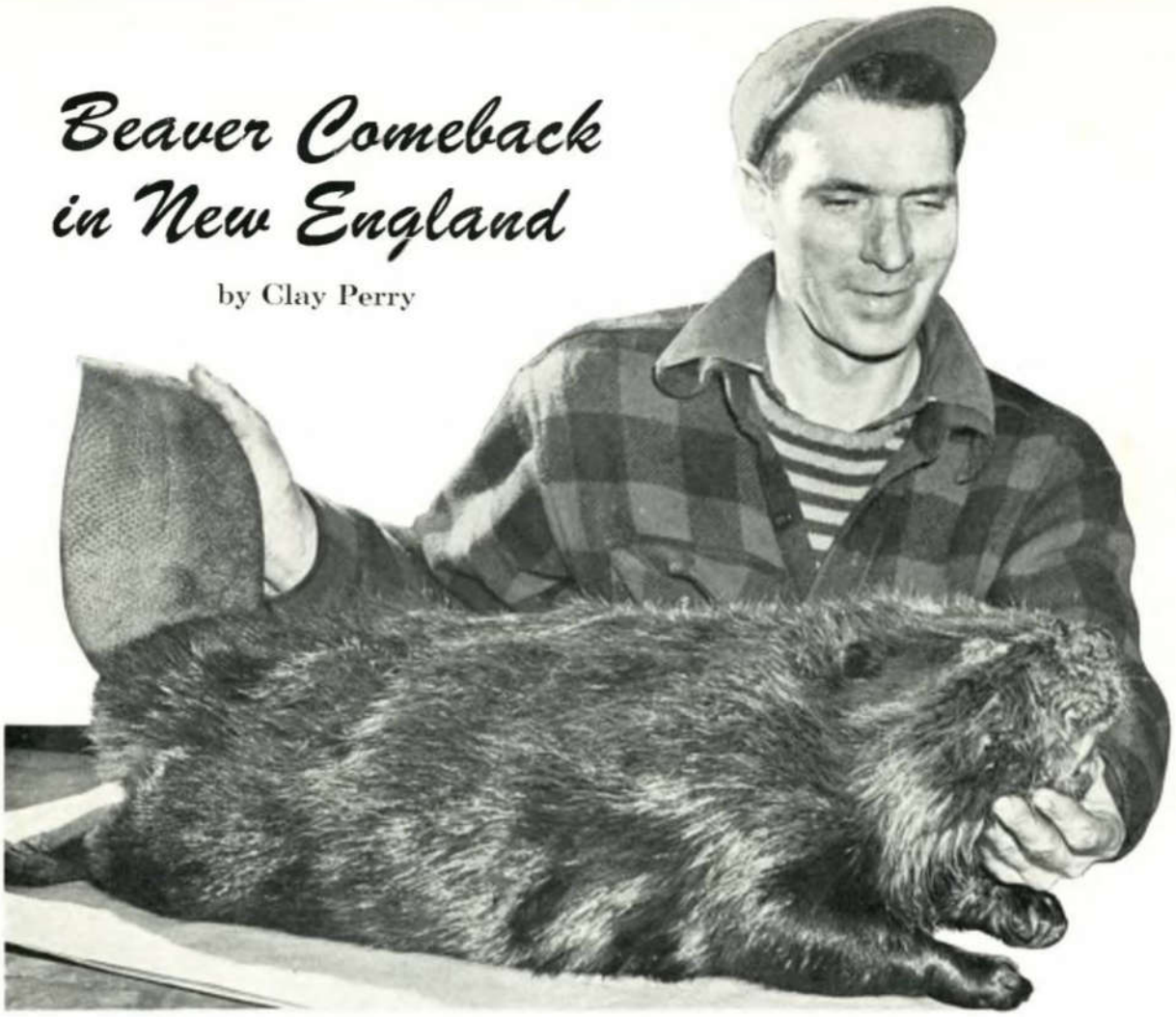
removed songs succeeded: the wild choruses of the Franco-Canadian voyageurs, some of especial adaptation, others, the relics of La Vieille France imported by the ancient immigrants, and at last, if the fun did not grow exactly "fast and furious," it presented at least a very warm contrast with the wonted frigidity of our every day's existence.

Then, on the morrow of these occasional white days of Lachine life, came the revulsion; and it was amusing to watch the air of almost penitential decorum with which our worthy commander, after some passing comments on the events of the past day, would enunciate his stereotyped remark, "Now, gentlemen, these Saturnâ-âlia being concluded we will resume our duties." And back we went, reluctantly enough, to the musty records, or such other superfluous pen-work as the ingenuity of our ruler could devise to keep us out of mischief.

I have dwelt somewhat on these reminiscences of Lachine partly because at this remote day I recall them with a feeling of rather melancholy satisfaction; partly since they serve an ulterior purpose exemplifying the probationary routine through which the aspirants to the higher grades of the Service were to some extent prepared for the responsibile positions which they were destined afterwards to fill. Habits of regularity and discipline were formed, the necessary prelude to the exercise of future authority, and withal an *esprit de corps* was created through occasional interchange with the older habitués of the Service—no feeble bond of union in after days. ◆

Beaver Comeback in New England

by Clay Perry



A trapper of Berkshire County, Massachusetts, proudly displays a 55-pound beaver he caught on February 19 this year. Berkshire Evening Eagle

After being absent for about two centuries, wild beaver have returned to some of the New England States.

THE example of Canada in the great beaver conservation projects originated by J. S. C. Watt at Rupert's House, and carried on since 1933 by the Hudson's Bay Company, is being followed by the several New England states, New York and others of the United States with most gratifying results. In fact, they are astonishing.

Perhaps the most astonishing thing about the various "beaver projects" as they are called, is the fact that they were practically forced upon some of the New England states by the beavers themselves. These busy little animals literally gnawed and built their way into scientific conservation methods and protection.

By a co-incidence the return of beavers to parts of New England where they had been absent for 175 to 200 years, began in the same year that Mr. Watt took over two colonies near the company's oldest post. That was in 1930.

In Massachusetts it was two colonies, or rather, two sets of three beavers imported there that started the comeback of the chisel-toothed beasts and compelled conservation officials to do something about their fast increase. But it was not until the 1940's that widespread beaver projects were instituted by the U.S. government, or partly financed, in co-operation with state conservation divisions. It was 1948 before an organized program got under way in Massachusetts and this had to be done because of the "beaver menace" to farms, roads, bridges, crops and even railroads.

Some of the states, notably New York, Maine, Vermont and several western states had set up their own beaver projects before the Pittman-Robertson Act, adopted by Congress, furnished federal funds to aid the states, in general wildlife conservation and propagation. The most picturesque and certainly most successful efforts under the Act were with beavers, whose industry was diverted from damming streams that flooded farmlands, threatened water supply reservoirs, and otherwise began to cause havoc in

settled areas, to the conservation of water in public domain such as state forests where they were planted after being live-trapped.

In the eastern United States it was not so much the necessity of protecting the beavers from trappers as it was protecting people (that is, their property) from the beavers; then these efforts were extended to guarding the beavers so that their tribe might increase.

And the latest development in at least one state where beaver had not been seen or trapped in about two centuries is the open season for trapping in Massachusetts.

This began on February 4, 1952, and extended through the 29th in the western counties, ranging from the Connecticut River on the east to the New York state line on the west, and from Vermont to Connecticut on the north and south. Over one hundred trappers took out the special permits required, but whether all of them actually tried trapping, is not known. At any rate only 61 beavers were caught—and held—during the entire month out of an estimated population of one thousand or more within the open area.

One of the factors that militated against successful trapping was the inexperience of many of the trappers; still another the fact that trapping is not permitted in several of the towns in the area, due to the "local option" feature of the trapping laws, which permit trapping only where the voters have sanctioned it by referendum vote. This is a hangover from the one-time Anti-Steel-Trap Law that was in effect in Massachusetts in the early 1930's, and which was repealed with the local-option rider substituted.

However, some fine pelts were obtained, ranging up to 76 inches for "blanket" pelts which sold for $24 to $30 each, the maximum price, with a low of $12 for the smaller ones. The low prices, compared to what they were up to 1946 in the fur markets also tended to discourage trapping. Pelts went for $60 to $76 in 1946.

The heaviest catch of beavers in Massachusetts was in Berkshire County, with a total of forty-eight reported at special checking stations manned by representatives of the Beaver Project in this most western county, and only thirteen reported elsewhere in the area.

The greatest number trapped in one locality was seven taken from two colonies near each other and too close to a railroad where they had been threatening to flood or undermine the tracks.

An illuminating result of the publicity attending the opening of the season, was a newspaper controversy, started by a lone fisherman who declared all beavers in Massachusetts should be exterminated. This man's blast at beavers was swiftly snowed under by a number of well informed persons who came to the defense of the animals, including workers on the Beaver Project itself, with E. Michael "Bill" Pollack, district wildlife manager for the Berkshire area as spokesman. His statement in brief defended the beaver as being of vastly greater value than the damage it does even in settled sections of the country.

At any rate beavers appear to be in Massachusetts to stay, and are known to be increasing also in Connecticut after two centuries of total extinction in that state.

In 1930 two jokers of the little town of West Stockbridge, Mass., managed to import three beavers from far away Wisconsin. The three were placed secretly in State Line Brook, which ambles through the only water gap in the Taconic Range of mountains, between Massachusetts and New York. These beavers, their dams and lodge, were "discovered" by fishermen about a year later, and sportsmen's clubs agitated for a law to protect them. It was passed.

In 1932 the warden of the Pleasant Valley Sanctuary in Lenox, Mass., an adjoining town, was inspired to secure some beavers for the principal purpose of having them build dams and make ponds to attract waterfowl and provide for better trout fishing on Yokun Brook that winds through the lovely, wooded area enclosed in the sanctuary.

Again it was three beavers in the colony, brought from the Bear Mountain Park sanctuary in New York. The male of the original pair, shipped to Warden S. Morris Pell, was found to be a cripple, and so a second male was

Beaver trappers at Pittsfield, Mass., show off the best of the pelts they caught last winter. Wm. Plouffe

Because he was making a nuisance of himself, "Tony" Beaver was live-trapped and moved to a better range in a state forest.

sent to make up for the cripple, a big fellow. Warden Pell named them Paul Bunyan the cripple, Paula Bunyan, his mate and the Big Swede—somewhat mixing up his American mythology, for "Tony Beaver" is the mythical lumberwoods giant of the south. But Pell began to keep a day-by-day diary or "log" of his beavers as a study in this sort of rare wildlife. He had enclosed them within an area of several acres, surrounded by a high wire fence, its bottom buried deep and loaded with rocks.

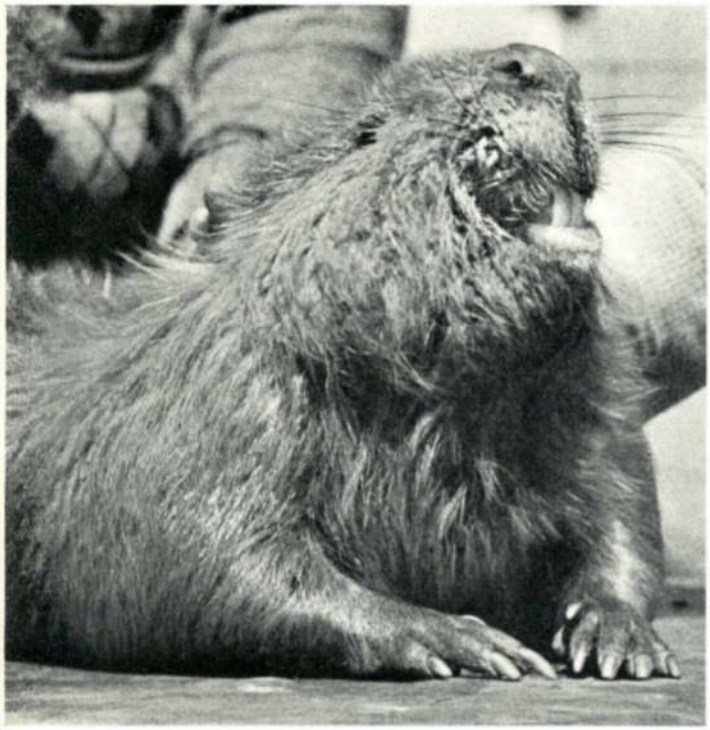
Paul and Paula went to work at once, built a dam, a lodge, prepared their stockpile of green branches for the winter, Paul working along despite his handicap, until the Big Swede attempted to aid them—or to take over and mate with Paula. There ensued a fierce battle, with Paula ably defending her crippled, chosen mate. The Big Swede was beaten off and retired in a sulk to an abandoned muskrat house, but Paul had been severely hurt, and finally died.

Meanwhile the Big Swede had broken out of the enclosure and had gone down the sizeable stream about two miles where he began to do some hydraulic engineering on his own. Whether or not he returned to the sanctuary to mate with Paula or she followed him is not known, but mate they did and within three years there were numerous dams on Yokun Brook—one of them eight feet high within one hundred yards of U.S. 7, a busy main highway—another 50 feet long, a third 200 feet long, a new lodge cleverly constructed over a ridgepole of a big felled apple-tree. A thirty acre tract owned by a Pittsfield, Mass., sportsman became mostly a shallow pond, and wild ducks began dropping in. Trout fishing was improved—for a few years—then it failed almost entirely, as is usual with beaver ponds.

And now, the jokers of West Stockbridge, and Warden Pell, to their astonishment, began to realize that they had accidentally started something, and had begun to make Massachusetts the laboratory state of New England for the study and encouragement of beavers.

The two colonies began to propagate others, until by 1948 beavers were appearing all over the map of Berkshire County, were in 22 towns out of 32, and in 1950 had an estimated population of 400 or more. They had begun to infiltrate into adjoining counties to the east, some were found as far east as Middlesex County, others had started south into Connecticut, for two centuries without a single beaver—but which had been settled in the 1630's by the Plymouth Colony because beavers were so plentiful then.

In 1947 the so-called Beaver Projects were activated under the Federal Pittman-Robertson Act, providing funds for the states that participated in the projects. New York had already started its project, and soon Massachusetts, Maine, Vermont and New Hampshire followed suit. First there was a survey; then annual live trapping by experts, transplanting of colonies from where they were "nuisances" to suitable areas, mostly state forests and other wild land.



Top end. This close-up shows the two sharp incisor teeth which form the beaver's chief tools, and his useful "hands." Bradford N. Mettey

By 1948 there had been 48 complaints filed with the Massachusetts Department of Conservation about beaver nuisances, brooks dammed and warmed up so that farmers could not cool their milk, fields and roads flooded, culverts blocked, a railroad threatened, even the water supply of the city of Pittsburgh tampered with, bridge work halted and many other annoying results of beaver work in settled communities.

Hard working and reluctant conservation officers were despatched to destroy dams and finally to shoot the beavers—and bury them because it was illegal to market the animals. But this sort of control soon was replaced by scientific methods, and by 1950 hundreds of beavers had been live-trapped in improved clam-shell type traps, and transplanted to suitable places. In that year the project workers were able to report that the number of colonies occupying "approved range" had doubled in Berkshire County, Mass., alone, and that was where most of the animals were concentrated.

Hundreds of persons have been able to watch the animals in some convenient places, at their work, even lighting them up at their nocturnal chores with auto headlights. Their flesh is good to eat. Not only the tails, though these are considered a delicacy, but the whole carcass.

The beaver projects in the northeastern states, as well as in others, are of concern to human inhabitants from a great many angles. Federal aid co-ordinators who head up the projects agree that the benefits from the presence of beavers are many, but that the general public does not realize the great asset beavers are.

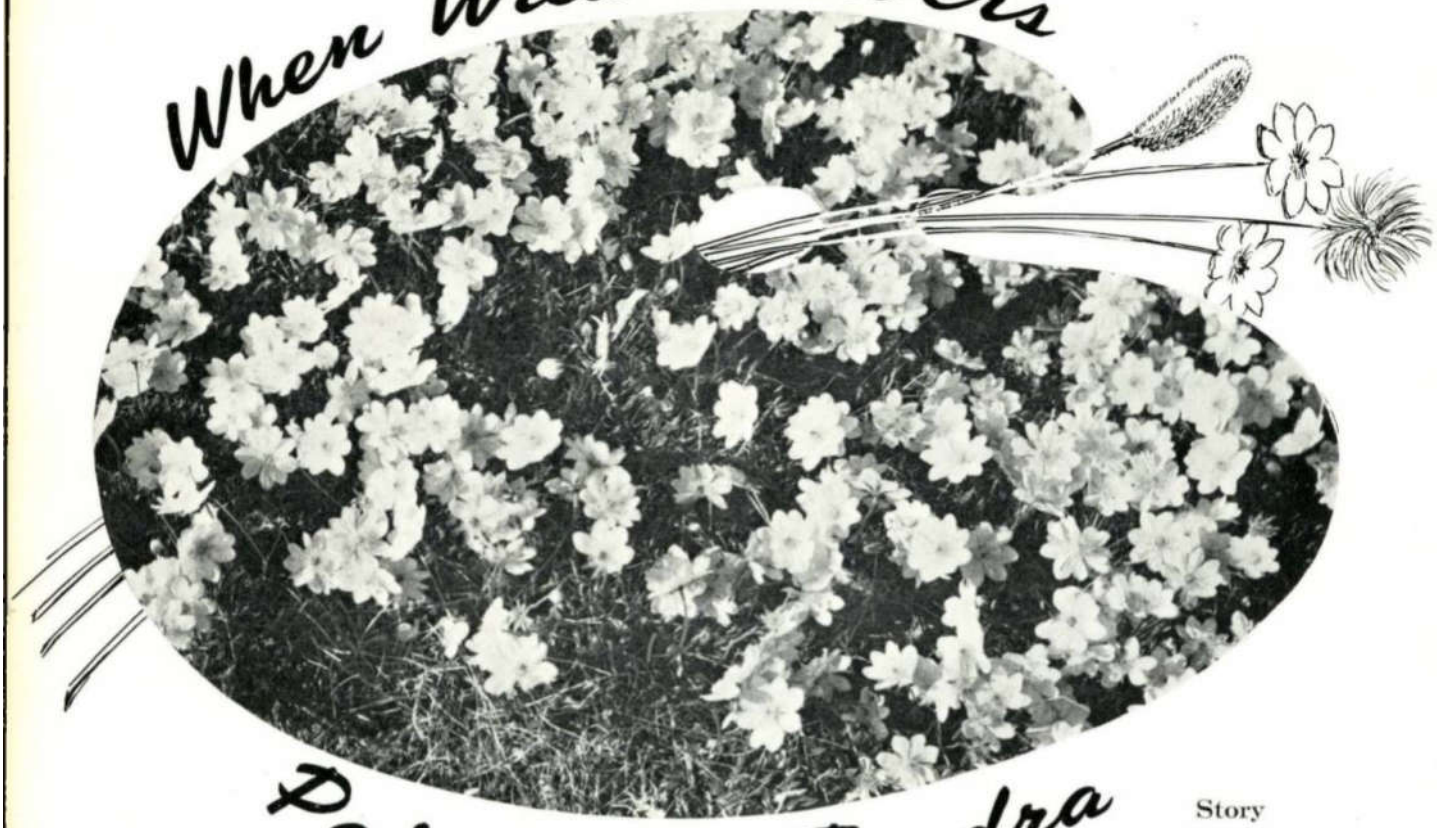
Maine is very proud of its annual take of beaver furs, averaging over 5,000 a year, with a record catch in 1940 of 9,011. Maine has never been entirely without them but they were vanishing rapidly until protected and encouraged. Now there are an estimated 20,000 or more in the state. New York has beavers in every county save those of greater New York City and they are pressing close to Broadway in Westchester County. The annual catch is about 2,000.

Of course the beaver population in toto in the northeast cannot be compared with that of the middle west, northwest, Canada and Alaska. Outside Canada, Alaska leads with an average yearly take of 14,000; Montana is second with 12,000, and the number ranges down to 4,000 for Nebraska—and now Maine can beat that.

To sum it all up, the northeastern states, which a few years ago considered the beaver a nuisance, are now coddling him as a preferred wild neighbor, in the seeming certainty of a real revival of the ancient and lucrative trade which saved the Colonists from starvation and which led to the settling and exploration of two big countries, Canada and the United States. ◆

Bottom end. In a most undignified position—head down in a metal pipe—an animal at the Beaver Project laboratory in Upton, Mass., gets a shot of nembutal. An hour later it can be safely weighed, sexed, and ear-tagged, and soon afterwards is feeling fine. Bradford N. Mettey

When Wild Flowers Paint the Tundra



Arctic Avens.

Story and Photos by Eva Beckett

WE are never quite certain which is lovelier, the tundra's vegetation in springtime or in autumn. In spring every tiny bud, every blade of grass, that pushes its way up through the cold wet earth, confirms our hope that at last "winter is past . . . flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come"—a happy assurance after long months of Arctic winter. And once the snow has gone, in no time at all, or so it seems, heath and bog are a riot of bright fragrant bloom. But when autumn breathes over the northland, every leaf and stalk takes on fresh glory.

In addition to the mosses and lichens, the grasses and stunted shrubs that one naturally associates with northern latitudes, there are many hardy fruits and flowering plants. Of these the majority are perennials with wintering buds ready to open as soon as the snow has gone. Some, like coltsfoot, send up a flowering stalk well before the leaves unfold. And in every case growth and development are extremely rapid. Many little plants require barely a month to start growth, to flower, and to mature seed. Such haste is necessary, for tundra summers are short.

In the Churchill district on the bleak west coast of Hudson Bay, the region most familiar to the writer, the first flower to open in spring is a tiny purple saxifrage (*Saxifraga oppositifolia.*) On rocky hillsides, clusters of these hardy little flowers lift their faces to the warming sun long before snowdrifts at the foot of the same hills have completely melted away. It is usually mid-June before we find these first flowers; others follow along in fairly quick succession. Another early saxifrage is the three-toothed, which spreads itself in huge green mats over rocks and gravelly soil and sends up a froth of slender-stemmed white flowers. While most of the saxifrages prefer a rocky terrain, there is a late-flowering northern one, the yellow spotted saxifrage, that holds its golden chalice high among the grasses of the bogs.

The tundra's vegetation varies greatly with its drainage. Tall coarse rushes and grasses, with Arctic cotton grasses predominating, abound in wet undrained places. These are quite showy in summer, with the fluffy white plumes of the cotton grasses fluttering in the breeze, but not until autumn has tinged their leaves and stalks with rich shades of orange and gold and brown are they really at their loveliest.

With their roots also in wet, though slightly better drained ground are dainty mauve and white primulas, violet-like butterworts, tall-stemmed grass of Parnassus, northern buttercups, Arctic daisies, woolly-flowered groundsel, golden cinquefoils, little blue gentians, coltsfoot with its huge rhubarb-like leaves, flowering cresses, and a host of others. But it is perhaps in the mossy bogs, which in spring are so often blanketed with delicate pink rosemary bloom (*Andromeda polifolia*), that the greatest

variety of plants is found. Here, among lichens and mosses of many colours and varieties, are sweet-scented orchids and pyrolas, showy louseworts, anemones, creeping azaleas, bistort, many interesting little sedges, and some of the tundra's luscious fruits, such as bearberry, Arctic raspberry, and the baked-apple.

One is always surprised to find so many of the *Orchidaceae* in northern latitudes. Yet for all their delicate appearance, many hardy varieties thrive best in a cool climate. Franklin's lady-slipper, with its lovely white "slipper" dotted with purple, is the largest and perhaps the most beautiful of the northern orchids, and ladies' tresses which flower late in the summer are the most fragrant. But there are others, like the northern bog orchis and the round-leaved orchis which grow in incredible numbers in some of the mossy bogs, that are very pretty too.

Growing everywhere on bog and heath are innumerable little willows. Fresh green in spring and golden in autumn, they add interest and variety to a landscape that would be bleak without them. By mid-June most of them are putting forth a brave show of catkins. For, although the shrubs are small—some varieties are merely creeping plants—there is nothing stunted about their sweet-scented flowers. When they ripen, songbirds that nest in the leafy willow bushes line their nests with the soft white down. And it is this down too that the Eskimos roll into wicks for their oil lamps. Even in winter, when partly buried beneath the snow, the little willows bring life and cheer to the tundra. At that season their buds are the ptarmigans' chief food, and their gnarled roots and branches yield the only bits of fuel available in some parts of the North.

Rioting over the drier heath-like terrain are many of the tundra's brightest and showiest flowers. Their bloom, with gold and purple colours predominating, is prolific during the early weeks of summer and, like that of practically all northern flowers, is extraordinarily sweet-scented. Among the most common are Mackenzie's hedysarum, Arctic milk vetch, Indian paint brush, yellow loco weed, goldenrod, Arctic avens, fireweed, arnica, narrow-leaved Labrador tea, and Lapland rhododendron.

Like others of the rhododendrons, this northern variety (*Rhododendron lapponicum*) is an evergreen and grows to be a fair-sized shrub when sheltered. In this wind-swept region we find it with branches flattened close to the earth for protection from both wind and snow. But it is a hardy plant as can be judged from the fact that in its woody

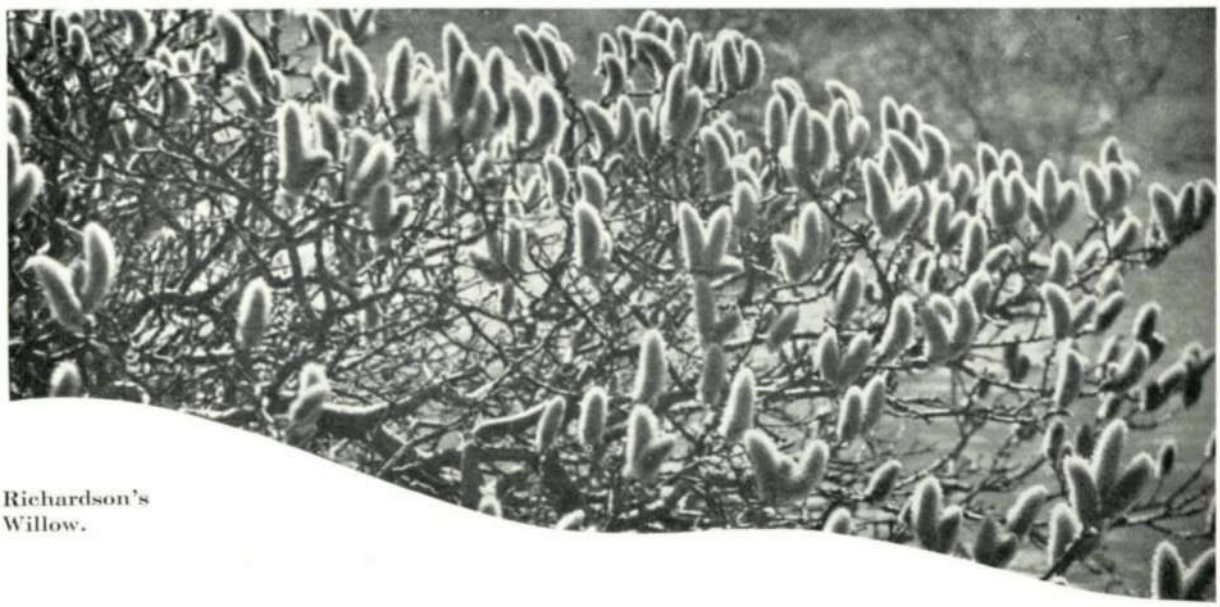
Sweet Coltsfoot with Alpine Speargrass.

Narrow-leaved
Labrador Tea.

stem, no bigger than a man's thumb, as many as 400 annual rings of growth have been counted. For about a fortnight in early summer its exotic magenta-coloured flowers carpet the heath and fill the air with delicate perfume. But such is the haste of northern plants, that before the last of the rhododendron's lovely rose-like petals have fallen, new buds are already formed for next year's bloom.

Even in parts of the Arctic, autumn comes as a season of "mellow fruitfulness." Along the Churchill River and in districts considerably farther north, an abundance of gooseberries, black currants, red currants and bog bilberries, the Arctic "blueberries," may be had for the picking. Besides these there are enormous quantities of cranberries, crowberries, bearberries and others that grow on low creeping vines. These are all plump well-flavored fruits that may be eaten raw or cooked, though some are at their best in jam or jelly. However, in a land so sparsely populated, comparatively little of the native fruit is taken for human consumption, but animals and birds feed copiously on it.

Toward the end of August, most northern plants take on brilliant autumn colors. Almost over-night they change to vivid hues of burgundy and scarlet, bronze and gold, russet and brown. And interspersing among lichens of soft mauve and grey and green tones, they spread a carpet of breath-taking beauty across the northland. While these bright colours last, we are almost convinced that the tundra's vegetation is lovelier at this season than at any other time of the year. ◆



Richardson's
Willow.

Notes of an 18th Century Northerner

by W. S. Wallace

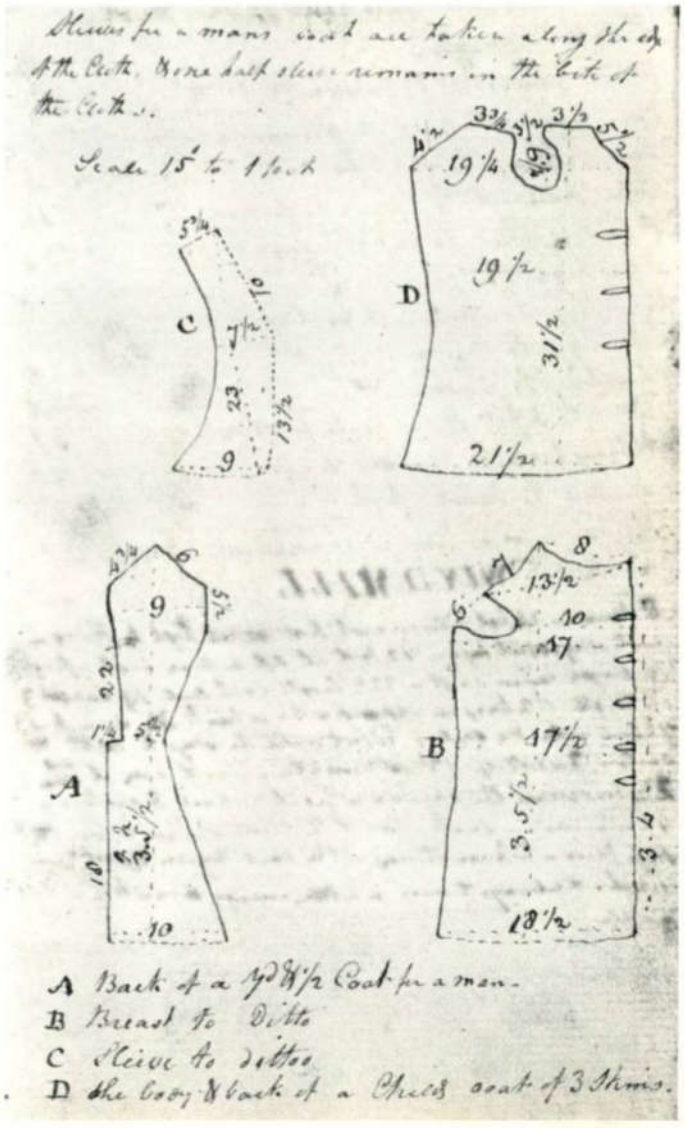
Peter Fidler's notebook gives an insight into the character and the activities of this famous northern traveller.

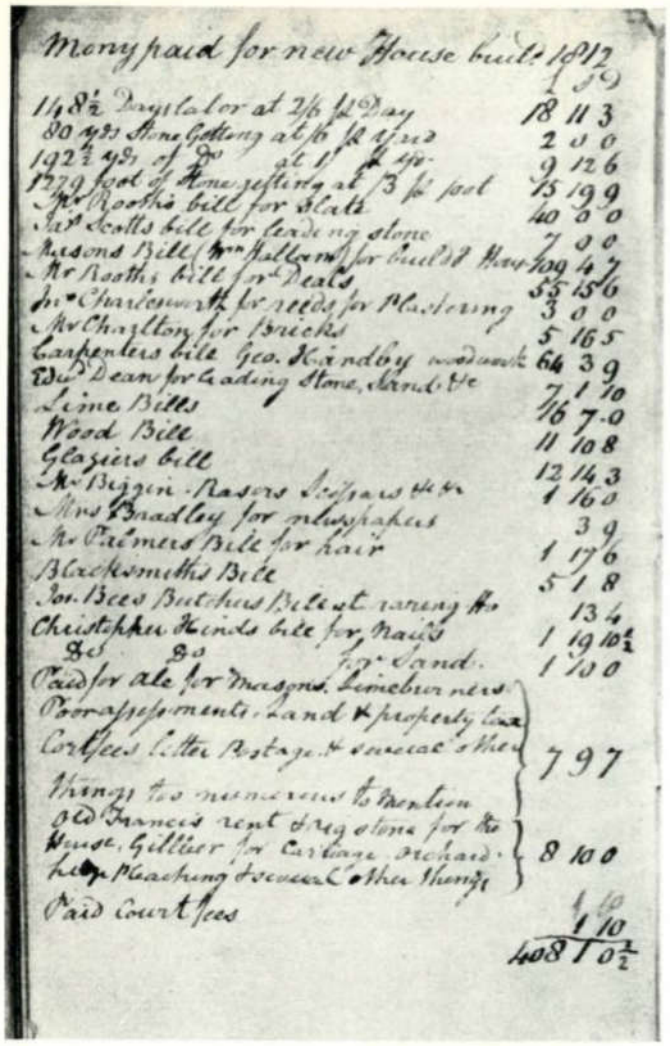
SOON after the present Provincial Librarian of Manitoba entered upon his duties, he was (I understand) going through some uncatalogued material when he came upon a very dusty bundle of documents tied up with string. On opening it, he found in the bundle a small notebook of forty-six pages with the name of Peter Fidler on the fly-leaf. The notebook, it appeared, had been bought by Peter Fidler in 1794, and had been used by him until shortly before his death in 1822 for the entry of whatever memoranda seemed to him worthy to be recorded. I can well imagine the thrill my colleague got when he made this discovery. Not only was any holograph manuscript of Peter Fidler's bound to be interesting and valuable, but a notebook covering most of his life in the North West could hardly fail to contain information of importance to the historian of the fur-trade, and incidentally to throw light on the character of Peter Fidler himself.

How this notebook came into the possession of the Provincial Library of Manitoba, is a matter of conjecture. We know from Peter Fidler's curious will (about which I wrote in the *Beaver* of June 1943) that he left his library of five hundred books to the governor of the Red River colony; and I understand that some of these books are still preserved in Hudson's Bay House in Winnipeg, as well as in the Provincial Library. But the notebook was evidently not among them. It seems probable that the notebook was inherited by one of Peter Fidler's half-breed children; and it would appear to have remained in private hands for over a century. That it has survived can only be regarded as a miracle; and its survival is an interesting illustration of how valuable documentary material may still come to light.

"Queer old Peter Fidler," as the Reverend George Bryce calls him, is one of the most enigmatic figures in the early history of the Canadian West. Not only is it difficult to explain his will, which was designed to tie up the residue of his estate for nearly one hundred and fifty years, but it is not easy to explain how he came to play so notable a part in the history of the Canadian West. He entered the service of the Hudson's Bay Company in 1788, at the age of eighteen, as a "labourer." Yet only two years later, when a mere youth of twenty years, we find him chosen by Philip Turnor, the Company's "surveyor," as one of his two assistants. The other assistant was David Thompson. Both he and Thompson must have learnt much from Turnor; but it is with surprise that we find that this young "labourer," then only twenty-six years of age, was appointed "surveyor" and map-maker to the Honourable Company when David Thompson went over to the Nor'Westers in 1796. Not only this, but Peter Fidler remained the Company's surveyor until shortly before his death at Manitobah post in 1822; and there are those who maintain that it is a moot question whether his contribution to the map of western Canada was not as great as that of David Thompson. Certainly, he was the surveyor of the Red River Settlement; and at the time of the union of the North West and Hudson's Bay Companies, his maps were thought worthy of being sent to London, while David Thompson's great map remained in Canada.

Patterns for a man's and a child's coats, which Fidler probably drew to guide his Indian wife.





Money paid for new House built 1812

	£	s	d
1148½ Days Labor at 2/6 p. Day	18	11	3
80 yds Stone Getting at 5/ p. yd	2	0	0
192½ yds of Do at 1/ p. yd.	9	12	6
1379 foot of Stone getting at 3 p. foot	15	19	9
Mr Roothe's bill for Slate	40	0	0
Mr Scotts bill for Leading stone	7	0	0
Masons Bill Wm Fallows for Building House	109	4	7
Mr Roothe's bill for Deals	55	15	6
Jno Charlesworth for reeds for Plastering	3	0	0
Mr Charlton for Bricks	5	16	5
Carpenters bill Geo. Kindby wood work	64	3	9
Wm Dean for Leading Stone, Sand &c	7	1	10
Lime Bills	16	7	0
Wood Bill	11	10	8
Glaziers bill	12	14	3
Mr Beggin Razors Strops &c &c	1	16	0
Mrs Bradley for newspapers		3	9
Mr Palmers Bill for hair	1	17	6
Blacksmiths Bill	5	1	8
Jno Bees Butchers Bill at various times		13	4
Christopher Hinds bill for Nails	1	19	10½
Do Do 10 Yds Sand.	1	10	0
Paid for ale for Masons, Limeburners, Poor assessments, Land & property tax, Cartages Letter Postage & sundries & other things too numerous to mention	7	9	7
Old Frances rent & Stones for the House, Gilliers for Carriage of Rubbish, Plastering & several other things	8	10	0
Paid Court fees		1	0
		1	10
	408	1	0½

Cost of a stone house in 1812. Items such as "Poor Assessments" and "Slate" suggest that the house was built in England.

The notebook helps us to understand how he came to make such a contribution to the map of western Canada. Though his formal education ended in his 'teens, he was a man who kept on educating himself. There are in the notebook several entries of books which he intends to order from England, such as "Sir Jonas Moor's Mathematicks" and "The Theory & Practice of finding the Longitude at sea or land, by And[w] Mackay." There are two pages of algebraic formulae which he evidently did not wish to entrust to his memory. One is intrigued by the thought of a young man teaching himself algebra on the western prairies in the eighteenth century. It is clear that he had an insatiable thirst for knowledge. Not only does he enter in his notebook the latitude and longitude of every post he visited, as well as the latitude and longitude of posts the position of which he learned from others, but he takes great pains to calculate the distance between places—between Montreal and Grand Portage, between York Factory and Cumberland House, and between these posts and other posts. When he learns that the Queen Charlotte Islands, off the west coast of North America, had been discovered in 1788, he tries to calculate how far these islands are distant from Cumberland House.

These are matters with which, as surveyor to the Hudson's Bay Company, he might perhaps have been reasonably expected to concern himself; but his mind ranged far beyond questions of geography. He makes an attempt to compute the total population of the earth, and to divide this total according to religion. He draws up a table showing the average duration of life of wild animals, in which appear some surprising estimates—such as "25 years" for the partridge and "100 years" for the raven, the eagle, and the wild goose. Modern zoologists would undoubtedly dismiss these estimates as guesses; but one feels that Peter Fidler, with his passion for accuracy, had at least some basis for his guesses. He even shows himself as a budding anthropologist, for he lists the contents of a gun-chest of Indian and Eskimo "curiosities" which he sent to England in 1813—a collection which any large museum of anthropology on this side would to-day, no doubt, give a good deal to recover.

Of course Peter Fidler was a practical man; and there are plenty of entries that illustrate this side of his character. He has a page showing the patterns (very much reduced in size) for the making of a man's coat, since the tailoring of a white man's coat was probably beyond the skill of his Indian wife. Into a quarter of a page he compresses the details of how to build a windmill; and he itemizes on another page the cost of building a stone house, though he does not tell us where this house was built. The cost reached the staggering total of £408. He notes the dimensions of a variety of things. The batteaux of the Hudson's Bay Company that came inland from Fort Albany, which were the prototypes of the York boats, are described as follows: "Length of keel 19 ft. 4 in.—three strokes from the gunwale clinker built. Cargo 33 bundles of 90 lbs. each—Provisions and Goods included." He notes the dimensions of the beaver-press, or fur-press, to have been two feet four inches in length, and one foot two inches in breadth; and he describes the dimensions of the six varieties of copper camp kettles as ranging from four to nine and a half inches in diameter and four and a half inches in depth to nine inches. We have in full the "Standard of Trade" that the Company used in 1795 (that is, the price of trading goods in terms of skins); and we have the list of prices the Company charged its servants for goods in 1801 and in 1806. Peter Fidler could buy, for instance, guernsey frocks for his wife in 1801 for six shillings, but in 1806 they had risen to nine shillings. (How wonderful if one could buy dresses for one's wife even at the latter enhanced price!) For himself he could buy in 1801 what are described as "Fearnaught" trousers for one beaver-skin. On the other hand, the cost of a gallon of rum had dropped from twelve shillings in 1801 to eight shillings in 1806.

A revealing sidelight on the cordial relations that existed at one time between the rival traders is found on one page, which itemizes debts collected from the Ojibways, by the North West Company, on behalf of the H B C. Furs amounting to 260 Made Beaver in value are listed, and Fidler notes that he had "Recd. the above from Mr. Shaw,

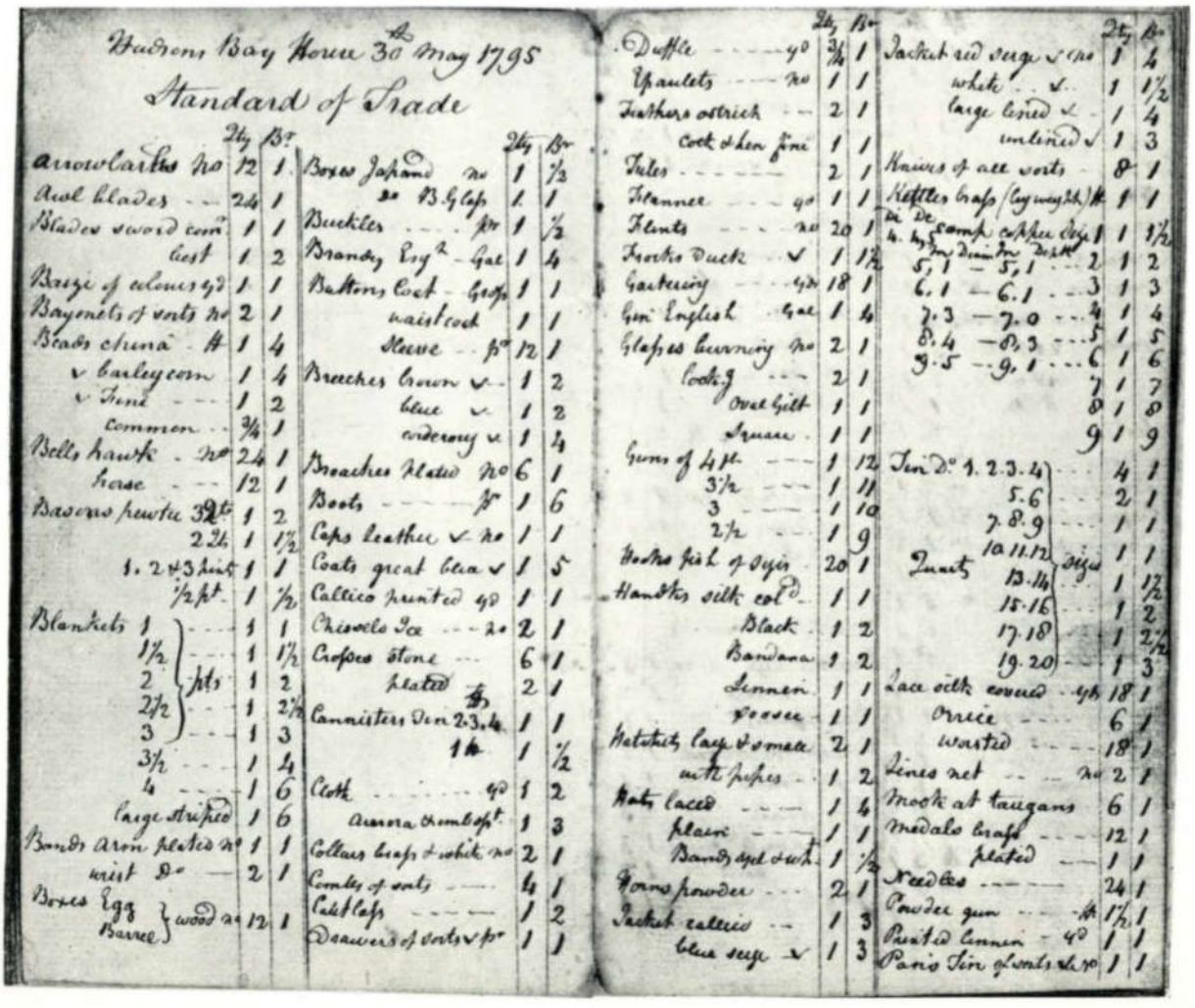
12th May 1800—as part of our Debts, owing us by the Bungees &c &c." This was presumably Angus Shaw, who was then in charge of the Upper English River district for the North West Company. On the opposite page is a list of sales of fish net twine, made by the Hudson's Bay Company to various members of the N.W. Co. between 1796 and 1800, the amount being paid in September 1802.

Fidler's note book even served one of the purposes of a family Bible. On the lower half of one of the pages he entered the dates and places of the birth of his children, with their names, and the dates and places of their deaths, when they died before him. He notes, indeed, even the hour of their birth. He had fourteen children, and of these only four died before he did—not a bad record of infant mortality for those days and those conditions.

One of the most interesting features of the notebook, however, is that it settled conclusively a recent controversy between historians of the fur-trade. In 1936 the late Professor A. S. Morton (whose great contribution to the history of the Canadian West no one would think of minimizing) advanced a theory, in an article in the *Canadian Historical Review* for September, 1936, entitled "The North West Company's Columbian Enterprise and David Thompson," which challenged the views previously held with regard to the date at which white men had first crossed the Rocky Mountains by the Athabasca Pass. The Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada had put up a monument in Jasper Park stating that the Athabasca Pass had first been crossed by David Thompson in 1810. Professor Morton sought to prove that Duncan McGillivray, one of the partners of the North West Company, and a nephew of the great Simon McTavish, had, with David Thompson as his assistant, crossed the Rockies to the source of the Columbia River in 1801, and had returned by way of the Athabasca Pass.

His argument was controverted by Mr. J. B. Tyrrell in a most convincing article in the *Canadian Historical Review* for March 1937, entitled "David Thompson and the Columbia River"; but it was not until Mr. Tyrrell was able to consult the recently discovered notebook of Peter Fidler that he was able to clinch the matter. In the notebook he found set forth certain observations made for latitude and longitude by David Thompson, recorded by Peter Fidler when he was obviously at Cumberland House; and after these observations are the words, "The above Positions given me by Mr. Duncan McGillivray June 17th, 1801." From this it was clear that Duncan McGillivray was at Cumberland House, on his way to the Grand Portage, when Professor Morton would have had him on the other side of the Rocky Mountains. ◆

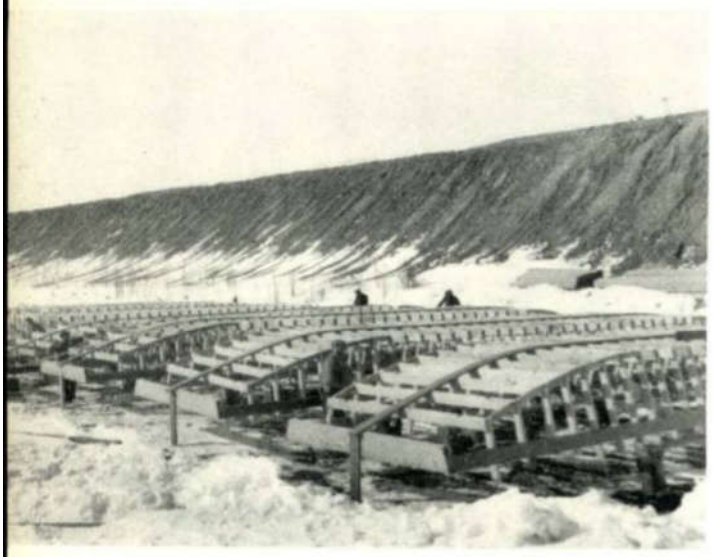
Two pages of the notebook giving prices of trade goods in beaver, at a time when there was stiff competition from the North West Co.



Hudsons Bay House 30th May 1795

Standard of Trade

	Py	Br
Arrow Carthes No	12	1
Awl blades	24	1
Blades sword com[n]	1	1
best	1	2
Braze of eleven 4d	1	1
Bayonets of sorts No	2	1
Beads china ℔	1	4
✓ barleycorn	1	4
✓ fine	1	2
common	3/4	1
Bells hawks No	24	1
horse	12	1
Basons pewter 32 ℔	1	2
22 ℔	1	1½
1. 2 & 3 pint	1	1
½ pt	1	½
Blankets 1 pts	1	1
1½ pts	1	1½
2 pts	1	2
2½ pts	1	2½
3 pts	1	3
3½	1	4
4	1	6
large striped	1	6
Bands Iron plated No	1	1
wrist D[o]	2	1
Boxes Egg wood No	12	1
Barrel		
Boxes Japand No	1	½
D[o] B. G. Clasp	1	1
Buckles pr	1	½
Brandy Leg[a] Gal	1	4
Buttons Coat Gross	1	1
waistcoat	1	1
Sleeve pr	12	1
Breeches brown ✓	1	2
blue ✓	1	2
corderoy ✓	1	4
Breaches plated No	6	1
Boots pr	1	6
Caps leather ✓ No	1	1
Coats great blue ✓	1	5
Callico printed 4d	1	1
Chissels Ice No	2	1
Crapes stone	6	1
plated	2	1
Canisters Doz 2.3.4 lb	1	1
1 lb	1	½
Cloth 4d	1	2
Aurora & mixt pt	1	3
Collars Leaf & white No	2	1
Combs of sorts	4	1
Cutlass Clasp	1	2
Drawers of sorts ✓ pr	1	1
Duffle 4d	3/4	1
Epaulets No	1	1
Feathers ostrich	2	1
Cock & hen fine	1	1
Files	2	1
Flannee 4d	1	1
Flints No	20	1
Frocks Duck ✓	1	1½
Gartering 4d	18	1
Gun English Gal	1	4
Glasses burning No	2	1
Cooking	2	1
Oval Gilt	1	1
Square	1	1
Guns of 4 ft	1	12
3½	1	11
3	1	10
2½	1	9
Hooks fish of Sizes	20	1
Handkfs silk col[d]	1	1
Black	1	2
Bandana	1	2
Linnen	1	1
Poosee	1	1
Hatchets Large & small	2	1
with pipes	1	2
Hats laced	1	4
plain	1	1
Bands Gold & wh[te]	1	½
Horns powder	2	1
Jacket callico	1	3
blue serge ✓	1	3
Jacket red serge ✓ No	1	4
white ✓	1	1½
large lined ✓	1	4
unlined ✓	1	3
Knives of all sorts	8	1
Kettles brass (Caymayth) ℔	1	1
D[o] D[o] Sauce pan & Cover Sizes 4. 3. 2	1	1½
Inch diam[r] Pints 5,1 — 5,1	2	2
6.1 — 6.1	3	3
7.3 — 7.0	4	4
8.4 — 8.3	5	5
9.5 — 9.1	6	6
	7	7
	8	8
	9	9
Tin D[o] 1. 2. 3. 4	4	1
5. 6	2	1
7. 8. 9	1	1
Quarts 10 11. 12 Sizes	1	1
13. 14	1	1½
15. 16	1	2
17. 18	1	2½
19. 20	1	3
Lace silk covered 4d	18	1
Orrice	6	1
Worsted	18	1
Lines net No	2	1
Mock at taugans	6	1
Medals brass	12	1
plated	1	1
Needles	24	1
Powder gun ℔	1½	1
Printed Linnen 4d	1	1
Paris Tin Quarts &c No	1	1

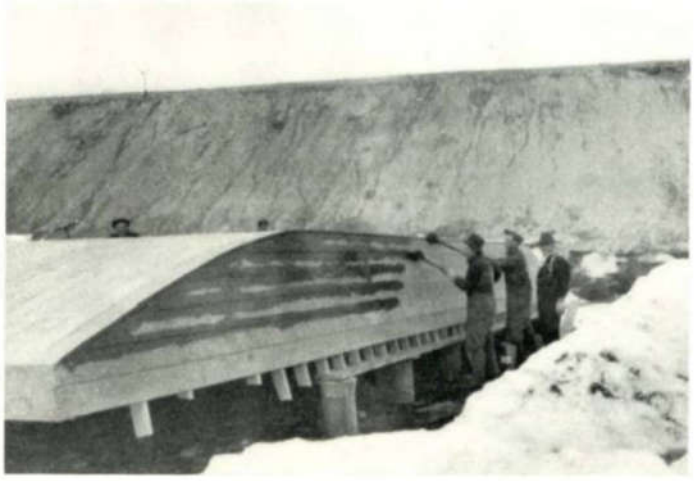


1. A row of scows below the C.N.R. embankment at Pagwa, before the planking has been put on. They were about 55 feet long and 11 feet wide, the ribs being made of spruce and the planking of B.C. Fir.

SCOWS on the PAGWA

Story and Pictures

by C. D. Twiner



2. Applying the pitch to the joints of the planking. R. to L.: Capt. E. B. Haight of Edmonton, who had had many years of experience with scow brigades on the Athabasca; Julian Mills, son of Capt. J. W. Mills of Mackenzie River fame; E. J. Haight, Captain Haight's son.

ONE by one the old methods of fur trade transportation are giving way to the new. The last York boat was beached some twenty years ago. The sturgeon-head of the Athabasca River has also gone—though unlike the York boat no example of it has been preserved for posterity. The big twenty-two foot freight canoe last saw river service a few years ago in northern Quebec. And even the picturesque sternwheel steamer will be seen no more on the waters of the Mackenzie River system. Now, with the closing of English River post in Northern Ontario, the humble wooden scow has gone to join the procession of outmoded craft.

The scow, like its more finished sister, the sturgeon-head, differed from most river craft in that it was made to be destroyed. Always built at the head of navigation, its motive power was the river current, and after being loaded,

3. A scow is turned over by means of a rough capstan.

it was floated down to its destination. There it was unloaded, and broken up for lumber. In other words, it carried a double cargo—the cargo of merchandise it held, and the cargo of lumber that was itself.

The last of the scow brigades was that which ran from Pagwa down the Pagwachuan River, to the Kenogami, and so into the Albany and down to James Bay. I worked on that brigade during the middle 1920's, both at Pagwa and on the run to Albany and back, and the accompanying photographs were taken during those years. Early in January there would arrive from Alberta Capt. E. B. Haight, one of the most famous rivermen of the Canadian West, and Henry Brown, scow-wright, to superintend the building of the summer's scows. They were old hands at building and navigating sturgeon-heads down the treacherous waters of the Athabasca River (See "Mackenzie Memories," *Beaver* Sept. 1948). With them came Julian Mills, son of Capt. J. W. Mills of Mackenzie River fame, and Ernie Haight to assist his father as mate.

As will be seen in the pictures, the scows were built side by side on the river flat below a steep railway embankment

6. From the bank the heavy craft glides out into the ice-fringed river. Next it will be brought to the bank and loaded with 10 to 12 tons of cargo.

5. A scow is launched in the Pagwachuan River. Ranged along the opposite bank are those belonging to Revillon Freres Trading Co., which were launched down the ladder-like slipway seen on the right.

4. Pushing a completed scow over rollers toward the river bank.

that led to the C.N.R. bridge over the river. They were about fifty-five feet long, with an eleven-foot beam, and when loaded with ten to twelve tons of cargo would draw little more than two feet. The framework or ribbing was of spruce, and this was covered with planking of B.C. fir.

As the building progressed, the cargo began arriving by rail from Montreal and Winnipeg. The sixty-foot high approach to the bridge was too narrow to allow construction of a spur track, so the train had to wait while the supplies were unloaded directly from the C.N.R. main line down a chute to the warehouse below.

By the middle of April all freight had arrived, and the scows and tug were ready for launching. As soon as the ice went out of the Pagwa River they were launched and loaded as quickly as possible to take advantage of the high water.

7. Lazy days on the Pagwachuan as the brigade of scows drifts slowly down to the English or Kenogami River.

8. The loaded scows at English River post, where they await the break-up of the Albany, another 60 miles downstream.

9. Where the current is slow and the water calm, the scows are taken in tow by the tug.

10. The "Pagwa River" with two of her scows anchored in tidewater off Albany post.

11. Pushed by the tug, the scows which were left at the mouth of the Kenogami head upstream to Ogoki.

Each scow was manned by a "steersman" and two men, and when all was in readiness was pushed off to drift away downstream. The big procession was on with the tug bringing up the rear and darting here and there like a mother hen shepherding its brood so that the scows did not become "bunched," thereby endangering one another while running the rapids.

Occasionally a scow would become grounded in one of the rapids or shallows, when all hands manned lifeboats or anything else that would float and lightered as much of the cargo as necessary to refloat the scow. This at times proved very arduous and risky work, for although the rapids were not deep the water was swift enough to capsize smaller craft, and wading or swimming ashore in the ice cold water was dangerous at best (as I found out).

On the long, lazy stretches of the river, the tug took all of the scows in tow. Upon arrival at English River post the extra scowmen were paid off and given transportation back to the "line" as three-man crews were not required beyond that point, and there was also a delay in proceeding further due to ice in the Albany River which did not normally break-up until ten days later than the smaller Pagwa and English rivers.

The trip from English River to Albany was usually uneventful as there was ample water to tow the scows.

Arrival at Albany was usually about May 20, and with the help of Post Manager J. W. Anderson and clerk Ronald Duncan and staff, discharging cargoes was a happy end to the long trek. The tug then proceeded back upstream to the forks of the English and Albany rivers where one or two scows with freight for Ogoki had been left on the downstream run. These scows were then strapped securely in front of the tug, which proceeded very slowly pushing them for 100 miles up the Albany River to Ogoki Post. At certain shallows or rapids in the river the tug had to be assisted by men with poles or with a "track line."

In 1931 the Temiskaming & Northern Ontario (now the Ontario Northland) Railway arrived at Moosonee on James Bay, and the transporting of supplies to Albany via scow brigade was, by comparison, rendered very uneconomical. For a number of years scows still operated to supply English River and Ogoki posts, but now with the closing of English River, and with aeroplane freighting to Ogoki, the scow brigade has disappeared from the Pagwa and Albany as it did years ago from the Athabasca. ◆

Dead Horse

The ritual of "chucking the dead horse overboard" described in such picturesque detail by young James McDougall on page 11 of this issue, is something new in nautical ceremonies as far as we are concerned, and we should welcome correspondence from readers who have come across it before. One of the people to whom we mentioned the performance said that it was customary on long voyages, but he didn't know the details. Its name evidently originated in *Don Quixote:* "I thought it working for a dead horse, because I am paid beforehand." That is certainly what the seamen who performed the ritual had been doing. They had been advanced a month's wages in London, and now that the month was over, they were chucking the dead horse overboard. It was true that they would not be paid off until the end of the voyage, but from now on they would not be "working for nothing."

Untrue North

Since the first man walked the first mile farther than his fellows the traveller's tale has been legendary. Men never see dragons, or unicorns, or even, we hope, witches, at home. They see them only in strange lands and faraway places.

One of these places—they are becoming rarer—is unfortunately the Canadian North. Here is still relatively uncharted ground and the traveller listening to the whisper of the north woods can hear and see fantasies and fancies galore. In the *Beaver* office our task is more prosaic. We stand self-appointed watchdogs on the literature of the north, regarding with sad, if charitable, eyes that other north so often recorded to such great length. For that reason readers will have detected a stern critical note in many of the book reviews published in these pages. Not all our reviews, of course, are of such a tone. The literature of the north is full of magnificent works, factually accurate, and beautifully written, but the main flow is unfortunately not of this quality.

Our reviewers are men who know the country from personal experience. In most cases they have spent longer in it and are better informed than the authors with whose work they are concerned. They are chosen for their knowledge. In the current issue readers will find three reviews whose tone they may consider somewhat harsh. Let us assure them that the written comments are nothing to the verbal ones which so often have accompanied them.

We do not want to sit in judgment on the work of others, but just as the *Beaver* has devoted itself to presenting accurate and original historical material, so we like to see the north dealt with as it deserves. In the vast reaches of the north country there are wonders enough. There is, over its isolation, sufficient mystery and sufficient fascination. No embellishment is required.

Contributors

Eva Beckett, wife of a Harbour Board official at Churchill, has made a hobby of Arctic flowers. . . . *J. A. Ford*, manager of Payne Bay post, in the Eastern Arctic, has served the Hudson's Bay Company for twenty-eight years. . . . *Richard Glover*, Ph.D., associate professor of history at the University of Manitoba, is also an amateur naturalist. . . . *Philip H. Godsell*, F.R.G.S., has travelled widely in the North and has made an intimate study of the Canadian Indians. . . . *Stephen Greenlees* was formerly with the National Film Board and now runs his own photographic business in Montreal. . . . *James McDougall* of St. Andrews, Scotland, joined the Company shortly before his 21st birthday, and was soon sent to Fort Yukon in Russian America, where he was in charge when the Americans took it over in 1869. He rose to the rank of Chief Factor, and died in 1915. . . . *Agnes Medd* is a daughter of Peter McArthur. . . . *Raymond M. Patterson*, who contributes an article and a book review to this number, is a skilled northern traveller and an experienced rancher. . . . *Clay Perry* is a writer of Pittsfield, Mass. . . . *A. Erling Porsild*, M.B.E., F.R.S.C., F.A.G.S., chief botanist of the National Museum of Canada, has spent many years in the Arctic, and is an authority on reindeer. . . . *Clarence Tillenius* is one of Canada's leading wildlife artists. . . . *C. D. Twiner*, formerly accountant with the Superior-Huron district, is now with the merchandising division of the Fur Trade Department. . . . *W. S. Wallace*, LL.D., is librarian at the University of Toronto. . . . *Madge Wolfenden* is assistant archivist at the B.C. Archives.

BOOK REVIEWS

THE AMERICAN BUFFALO: A Critical Study of the Species in Its Wild State, by F. G. Roe, University of Toronto Press, 1951. 957 pages.

"WITHOUT the buffalo," wrote H. Y. Hind in 1860, "it would have been impossible to have supported the large establishments on the Saskatchewan, or to have made the long voyages from the Rocky Mountains to the Hudson Bay, much less to have carried on that vast system of internal communication which employs upwards of two hundred boats . . . manned by more than one thousand, two hundred voyageurs." In other words, the H B C's operations in the mid-nineteenth century depended enormously upon the buffalo and the pemmican he produced. Nothing could indicate more clearly the importance of this one animal in fur trade history, and for that reason readers of the *Beaver* will welcome the present work.

Mr. Roe's book is a very fine achievement. It is hardly a mere history of the buffalo; it is almost a critical anthology of everything recorded about it before its disappearance as a wild animal. Mr. Roe's style is generally crisp and clear, his literary judgment is shrewd, his standard of accuracy high. It is most unlikely that his book will be superseded for many years, and it is worth remarking that this really valuable work comes, not from a professional and academic, but from an amateur, historian. One hopes other non-professional lovers of history may be encouraged by the example of his achievement.

Mr. Roe begins by summarising available material on the various long extinct bisons of North America and then proceeds to discuss recent American races. Here, with convincing argument, as it seems to us, he dismisses Shoemaker's classification of the former bison of Pennsylvania as a distinct race of woodland type. In chapters VII and VIII he discusses exhaustively the natural enemies of the bison. In chapter IX he reaches the European discovery of the animal and thenceforward deals with historical evidence of its habitat numbers and extermination, until in his three closing chapters he discusses migration and the influence of the buffalo environment on Indian mentality. But even then he has not finished. The book ends with some thirty appendices on side issues which have an interest of their own.

Even good books have their weaknesses, and Mr. Roe's is not free from them. It is unfortunate that, in attempting to establish the habits of the bison in its wild state, he rejects all evidence that might be derived from observing modern herds of bison in captivity. Failure to seek and use such observations causes him to err in his estimate of the period of a bison calf's dependence on its mother's milk, and the age of a heifer's breeding—both points pertinent to a discussion of the bison's extermination.

Another flaw, as it seems to us, in Mr. Roe's work is his treatment of the bison's migrations. In his view a true migratory movement should "exhibit uniform regularity." But that is hardly the case. Those of us who have kept bird notes know how widely from year to year the dates of the arrival of familiar migrants may vary. However, having laid down the rule that migration should "exhibit uniform regularity," Mr. Roe then proceeds to argue that the bison's movements were "utterly unpredictable," and, hence, not true migration.

Prima facie, there may seem a case for his view. Colonel Dodge declared that the bison of Arkansas migrated north in summer and south in winter. J. A. Allen records an east to west movement in northern Kansas. H. Y. Hind was specific on a northward winter migration of the bison of the Canadian prairies. So here is confusion confounded among first hand observers. Others again postulated an impossible migration of all bison from the northern prairies in summer to the southern states in winter.

Mr. Roe very soundly and trenchantly denounces this last legend, but with it he also dismisses the evidence of other reporters of migratory movements, being specially severe on Hind. In place of their evidence he puts forward his view that the movements of the bison were "utterly unpredictable" and cites as proof of his contention the analogy of the caribou. Here we do not follow him. It is rather common for herd animals to range a given, limited territory, and to make fairly regular, though not precisely punctual, seasonal movements within it. Fraser Darling has observed and described such movements in the Scottish red deer; in Alaska, O. J. Murie (with whose work Mr. Roe seems unfamiliar) has noted and mapped similar movements even among the caribou. The seasonal movements of the bison, as described by Hind, seem to us to conform comprehensibly enough to this type of local migration. The solution to the problem would appear to lie in local studies by areas, not in generalisation about the whole species. These weaknesses (as they appear to us) are to be noted by a reviewer, but they do not alter the fact that Mr. Roe has produced a very valuable and thought-provoking study of the American Buffalo.—*Richard Glover.*

WILDLIFE BEYOND THE NORTH, by Frank Illingworth. British Book Service, Toronto; Country Life, London; Scribners, N.Y., 1951. 162 pages.

THE ancients, whose imagination stopped at Ultima Thule, would doubtless have been astonished at the temerity of Mr. Illingworth, who has essayed to venture "Beyond the North." Once arrived, however, so persuasive is his treatment that the reader's initial misgivings

as to where exactly Mr. Illingworth proposes to lead him give way first to interest and finally to admiration.

Basically this is a book about the larger animals of the Arctic regions, which category does not exclude that highly interesting biped—man. The author's enthusiasm is infectious, and in some chapters, notably those dealing with the reindeer of Lapland and their introduction to North America, he rises occasionally to prose of rhythmic beauty and power. Periodically, the reader catches a glimpse of the Arctic seen through the eyes of an enthusiast: "Summer in Arctic Scandinavia is a delightful season. Winter sees these same *fjells* whipped by heavy blizzards and subjected to cold such that equipment for use on Antarctic expeditions is tested on their flanks. But in summer—in summer the sun shines for four months, the roaring rivers are full of fish and foam, the *fjells* hum with insect life, at least on their lower slopes, and the air is clear and full of the cries of birds. The harsh scream of the gyrfalcon . . . and that of the eagle mingles with the croak of ptarmigan and the piping of warblers, the honk of geese and the flurry and *whoosh* of duck. Cool breezes skim away from the glaciers to temper the heat. Black and brown peaks stretch upward from the spangled tundra . . . and perchance the cold, inhuman, frightening cry of the wolf drifts, crystal clear, across the lichen clad rocks."

Of absorbing interest is the epic story of the attempts to establish the reindeer in North America and Baffin Island. A single quotation must here suffice to indicate an underlying problem: ". . . But there is between the Lapp and the reindeer an understanding deeper than the capacity of speech. It is hardly surprising that the Eskimo has failed as a herdsman. For the reindeer is not made to be hunted, but to be tended." Mr. Illingworth has obviously gone deeply into the subject, and his account of the various experiments, why some met success and others inevitably failed, makes one of the most satisfactory surveys this reviewer has seen. Naturally a subject of such proportions cannot be adequately treated in a few chapters, but the author is to be highly commended for a logical and sympathetic analysis.

He is, perhaps, occasionally on somewhat more dubious ground when relating anecdotes about wild animals vouchsafed him by trappers. Herbert Spencer is said to have defined a tragedy as a promising theory killed by a fact—and perhaps the reviewer may be pardoned for surmising that some of Mr. Illingworth's informants might merely have desired to avert such a tragedy. It seems highly doubtful that a polar bear angered by a seal's escape would smash the bones of both forepaws by banging them on rocks in pique, or, that a pack of seven wolves could be driven *from their own kill* by the approach of a single wolverine! Yet, it is undeniable that a life-long observer of wild animals sees some astonishing things. *Quien sabe?*

The reader is well advised to read the book: he can then, according to his familiarity with the milieu, take issue with Mr. Illingworth or agree, as his experience dictates. The photographs are well produced, and many of them are excellent.—*Clarence Tillenius.*

PEOPLE OF THE DEER, by Farley Mowat. Atlantic-Little, Brown and Co., Boston, McClelland & Stewart, Toronto, 1952. 344 pages.

THE Caribou Eskimo are a small tribe of Canadian Eskimo who live in the interior of Keewatin and, until a few years ago had few contacts with the outside world, depending almost entirely on caribou for food and clothing. Although living within a few days' travel of the west coast of Hudson Bay, J. B. Tyrrell, in 1894, was probably the first white man to visit them, and not till after 1921-22, when members of the Danish Thule Expedition visited them, was much known of their life and primitive culture.

During the summers of 1947 and 1948, Farley Mowat made brief excursions into the land of the Caribou Eskimo, and in *People of the Deer* presents what is claimed to be a factual account of the past and present of one small band of Eskimo living on the upper Kazan River, near Ennadai Lake.

By evidence which is far from convincing, and very often totally erroneous, Mowat attempts to show that this small band a generation ago numbered into the thousands, but is now rapidly approaching extinction, largely because of Governmental neglect and indifference. *People of the Deer* is a book of pungent charges and accusations, not only against those Government officials in Ottawa who are charged with the welfare of Canadian Eskimo and Indians, but also against those who have assumed the responsibility for their spiritual care and, last but not least, against the traders and trading companies whose exploitation, according to Mowat, most of all is responsible for the present plight of the Caribou Eskimo.

Some of those charges are very grave, and they will, unfortunately, be read by many who lack first-hand knowledge about the Arctic. In fact, *People of the Deer* has already been widely read, for it was printed serially in the *Atlantic Monthly*, and has been glowingly reviewed in newspapers and magazines across the land and, by one reviewer, has even been hailed as "The finest thing of its sort ever to come out of Canada."

To point out even the more serious errors and half-truths in this book of 344 pages would easily run into a book-length report, and in the end would be repetitious and wearisome. A few random samples will suffice to show that the premises for Mowat's thesis are not at all well founded.

The reader is at once struck by a peculiar vagueness about routes, dates and means of travel. In chapter two, for example, Mowat describes how, in the spring of 1947, he travelled north, alone, to Churchill, without any definite plans; and there, after gathering what information he could, chartered a plane and flew to Nueltin Lake about which only the vaguest and most nebulous information was available. Could Mowat have forgotten that he went to Nueltin Lake as a junior member of a well organized and carefully planned expedition led by Dr. Francis Harper, and partly financed by the Arctic Institute of North America?

In 1948 Mowat again went North. On page 116 he reports: "Those whose interests in the land were measured in dollars and cents had abandoned both it and its People. My interest was not so tangible, and when the winter of 1947-48 was near its end I again travelled north, but this time I had a companion. Andrew Lawrie, a student of zoology who shared my restless curiosity . . . had chosen to accompany me back to the Barrens." Actually Mowat's interest was not so intangible, for he was hired by the Dominion Wildlife Service to assist Lawrie, a field officer of that service, to study caribou migration. Arriving at Churchill, the two of them flew to Windy Bay.

On July 20, Lawrie and Mowat went from Windy Bay to Angikuni (not Angkuni) by charter 'plane, and on August 15, the 'plane returned to bring them back to Windy Bay. Mowat says nothing about 'plane trips, but clearly implies that he and Lawrie travelled by canoe both ways. Says Mowat (p. 236) "It would be tedious to write at length about the river above the Great Lake [Angikuni], for graves, rapids and falls are all of a kind, even when they stretch for two hundred miles. I shall begin the story of our visit to Angkuni on the day when our canoe came in sight of the famous hill called Kinetua, which guards the western entry to the lake. Ohoto was in the bow that day . . .". At the end of the season, ". . . when the deer were hurrying south to the forest to evade the impending onslaught of winter . . ." Mowat claims that he travelled by canoe via the Thlewiaza River to Churchill. Again we note that the official report definitely states that on August 15, Mowat flew to Churchill in the very 'plane that brought him to Windy Bay, and that from Churchill he returned to Richmond Hill, Ontario.

Mowat claims to have spent two years in the Barrenlands (p. 89) but the official records show that in 1947 he spent about five weeks at Windy Bay, three weeks on a trip to Brochet, and approximately three weeks in the Barrens. In 1948, he was at Windy Bay from May 19 to July 20, and again from September 9 to October 13, when he went to Brochet; and from July 20 to August 15, he was at Angikuni Lake. In other words, during 1947 and 1948, Mowat spent no more than 47 days in the Barrens and 132 days at Windy Bay, or just about six months, all told, in the Northwest Territories.

So much for Mowat's chronology. Now let us test the accuracy of his personal observations. On pages 66-69, when describing the spring migration of caribou which in June passed Windy Bay he says: "The herds were swelling past our look-out now. Ten paces from us, five, then we were forced to stand and wave our arms to avoid being trampled on. . . . Hours passed like minutes. The flow continued at an unbroken level until the sun stood poised on the horizon's rim. . . . For here was life on such a scale that it was beyond all comprehension." Francis Harper, in "Natural History," May, 1949, has given what seems a more realistic account of the same migration stating that "the largest band [of caribou] seen, numbered 75 animals." And when Mowat speaks of ". . . the distended bellies of the [pregnant] does and the ugly, bovine head of all the animals, quite without antlers in the spring . . ." the reader must truly wonder if Mowat actually saw any caribou that spring, for it is well known that very few caribou do shed their antlers until some time after their fawns are born.

Perhaps Mowat is a better historian than naturalist. On page 110 we read: "In 1860 when Brochet was already a well-established trading post there were about 2000 members of the Idthen band. . . . In the winter of 1948 when I visited the Idthen Eldeli at Brochet, the band numbered a little over 150. . . ." The implication, of course, is that the Chipewyans are dying out fast. But in 1860 there was no post at Brochet at all, and according to *Report from the Select Committee on the Hudson's Bay Co.*, Appendix C. pp. 365-367, London, 1857, the total population of all Reindeer Lake, including Crees, was no more than 250.

Mowat has harsh words about traders who take unfair advantage of the Eskimo; but on page 151 we find him paying only two plugs of tobacco to ". . . old Kala, Ootek's mother, who made my suit of furs . . .", while on page 118 we are told that "Hekwaw and Owliktuk had arrived with white fox pelts, and these they gave us as tokens of friendship, accepting our return gifts with deep gratitude," but ". . . we were running short of many things . . . and had to become parsimonious with our gifts. . . ." Tsk-tsk, Farley—and did you have a trading licence?

Vital statistics are important tools to the crusader but they are sometimes difficult to handle. On page 109 we read: "If you ask about the thousands of Indians and Eskimos who die each year of tuberculosis, if you ask about the measles and smallpox [sic] epidemics which in the last two decades have destroyed over one tenth of the Northern natives, and if you ask whether these people too died of starvation, I will answer that they did." And on page 110: "The reported death rate from tuberculosis in Canadian Northwest Territories between 1937 and 1947 was 761 per 100,000 as compared with 50 per 100,000 in the rest of Canada. This figure includes *only* those native deaths examined by a medical officer. There is good reason to believe the true figure should be well over 1000 deaths, since a high proportion of the Northern peoples die, and are buried, without the knowledge of white men."

If "thousands of Indians and Eskimos" die each year of tuberculosis alone, and if the total death rate is over a thousand per 100,000 of population, there must be several hundred thousand Eskimos and Indians in the Northwest Territories. According to the Government publication *The Northwest Territories, Administration, Resources and Development*, Ottawa, 1948, there were, in 1948, a total of 4,000 Indians and 5,650 Eskimos in the Northwest Territories. With a death rate of 761 per 100,000 of population the annual mortality from tuberculosis then is only 73—a far cry from the "thousands" reported by Mowat and it is easy to see why, on page 110, he admits that he "loathes" statistics.

Unfortunately Mowat nowhere discloses the exact source of his information except when quoting his "song-

cousins" Ootek and Ohoto, and the information he "obtained" from them is very much at variance with published, and presumably authentic, figures. Thus, on page 147, we read: "So ends Ohoto's memory of the spring of the year 1947 . . . a year that took twelve lives from the twoscore people who were the last survivors of the thousands of men who roamed the plains country [upper Kazan R.] only a few decades ago." It so happens that a few decades ago, members of the Danish Fifth Thule Expedition visited the Caribou Eskimo and in *Reports of the Fifth Thule Expedition, 1921-24*, Vol. 5, Part 1 and 2, Copenhagen, 1929, those eminent students of Eskimo, Knud Rasmussen and Birket-Smith have given us a very detailed, 730 page account of these people. On pages 65-69 of Part 1 we find that there were then 432 Caribou Eskimo in the District of Keewatin, and of these only about 200 lived in the interior. The discrepancies between his and the Thule Expedition figures seem to have disturbed Mowat, for on page 255 he describes Rasmussen's contact with the Caribou Eskimos as "brief and clouded" and concludes that ". . . Rasmussen never met the Ihalmiut, and never even suspected their existence." True enough, Rasmussen never heard of the Ihalmiut because there never was such a tribe until Mowat "discovered" them. But he did know about the people of the upper Kazan, for Birket-Smith cites a report from Mr. R. G. Madill of the Department of Mines and Technical Surveys that in 1923, approximately 35 Eskimo lived in the vicinity of Ennadai Lake. In other words, Mowat's "thousands" have shrunk to a paltry 35—a smaller number than the "twoscore" which he reported for 1948.

The most disturbing thing about Mowat's thesis of maladministration of the Caribou Eskimo is that the bulk of his information is obtained direct from Eskimo, without the benefit of an interpreter. On page 119 we read: "The barrier of language which had bothered me the preceding year [1947] now seemed even more formidable. . . ." So, on page 121, Mowat sets about learning Eskimo—and wonder of wonders: "In a month's time I was able to make myself understood and I could understand most of what was said to me." On page 122 we learn how it was done: "The People taught me a root word, shorn of the multitudinous suffixes and prefixes which give their language a flexibility and delicate shading of meaning that is probably unsurpassed by any tongue spoken today. In effect, they developed a specialized 'basic' Eskimo entirely for my use. . . . So I learned the Eskimo vocabulary . . . until I mastered all the subtle sounds of their words. I found that I was able to speak about quite abstract subjects, and incidentally give the lie to those who say that these 'natives' are unable to think, or express themselves, in abstract terms."

As anyone who is even remotely familiar with Eskimo and their language will know, this claim is preposterous. The present reviewer, during approximately 20 years spent in various parts of the Arctic, from Alaska to Greenland, has come to know hundreds of white men who, after a lifetime among Eskimos are unable to carry on even a simple conversation in Eskimo; altogether he has met only a few, and certainly not more than a dozen white men, not born and raised among the Eskimo who, without the aid of an interpreter, could have recorded accurately the conversations which Mowat claims to have had. This is very important, for according to Mowat, most of the information on which his charges of maladministration of people and resources are based came from Eskimo who knew no English at all.

One thing that Mowat did *not* learn is the universal custom of bestowing Eskimo names on white men who go to live among them. Had Mowat become permanently adopted by the "Ihalmiut," his song-cousin, Ohoto, surely would have been in honour bound to name him "Sagdlutôrssuaq"—a most apt sobriquet—"Great Teller of Tall Tales."—*A. E. Porsild.*

NORTH OF THE CIRCLE, by Frank Illingworth. Ambassador Books, Toronto, and Wm. Hodge & Co., London, 1951. 254 pages.

THERE are so many fantastic statements in this book that the man who knows his Arctic will be inclined to dismiss it after reading the first few pages. But on the other hand he may be so fascinated by what he reads that he keeps on turning the pages just to see what other surprises are in store.

What will the Canadian reader think, for instance, when he is told that "the arctic is the most heavily wooded area outside the great tropical forest belt," or that the tree line "provides (in Canada) a cultural line between the territory of the white man and that of the arctic's natural inhabitants, the Eskimo and Northern Indians"? Those who know their Arctic geography will wonder why the author did not consult a map before he placed Somerset Island "in the extreme north-east of Canada." And it is hard to understand why, when he borrows so much from the *Beaver* to describe Canon Turner's famous dog-sled trip of 1938-9, Mr. Illingworth suddenly goes off the track and says that the canon was hit by a stray bullet from an Eskimo's rifle on a seal hunt. Certainly, this reviewer was amazed to learn that the Company he serves operates as many as 270 fur trade posts, and that the magazine he edits "is written by men in the Arctic for men in the Arctic."

On page 1, the author starts right in to destroy the common belief that the Arctic is "inhospitable in the extreme." He is definitely of the "Friendly Arctic" school—to begin with. But later he seems to change his mind, and describes at some length the hardships of Arctic life.

"One should differentiate," he writes on page 2, "between the arctic and polar regions. The former embraces the latter, yet they have little in common. I might describe the arctic as the habitable areas of the North, and the polar regions those areas from which the Ice Age has yet to retreat." All of which seems rather arbitrary.

There are many other errors in the chapters dealing with the North American Arctic (this review is not concerned with those dealing with Sweden, Russia, etc.) but they are too numerous to mention here. Mr. Illingworth has evidently been in the North a number of times, in both Europe and America—during the summer. But most of the information for this volume seems to have been derived from books and magazines.

The whole book gives one the impression of being done in a great hurry; else how does one explain such simple mistakes as: Richard (for Robert) Peary, St. Roche, Grealy (for Greely), *Edward* LaBine, *F*ort Harrison, Pedley (for Padley), Bishop Flem*m*ing, catapault, L*a* Pas, Obelate, Godthoat (for Godthaab), Mulato (for Nulato), promontary, Fairbank (Alaska), and Lake Athab*r*aska?

Some of the photos in the book are excellent, but there are no credits for them except one. A few appear to be the work of Bishop Marsh, Richard Harrington, Archdeacon Webster, and W. F. Joss. At the end there is a list of acknowledgments, but even there Richard Finnie's name is spelled "Finne."—*C. P.W.*

GRASS BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS, by Richmond P. Hobson Jr. Longmans, Green, Toronto, and J. P. Lippincott Co., Philadelphia. 1951. 256 pages.

THE key to Mr. Hobson's book is to be found on page 13. Like most American and Canadian boys, he tells us, he went through the "want to be a cowboy" stage, and had "visions of far-reaching mountain ranges, cattle herds moving across lonely treeless plains . . ." and so forth. "But unlike more normal boys, I was unable to shake these visions loose."

He has never shaken them loose—and the result is a good, clean adventure yarn which we can thoroughly recommend as a gift to any boy with out-of-door tastes, or to such adult readers as have a liking for western fiction of the type of *Canyon Rim* or *Flaming Guns on the Cimarron*, and are able to close their eyes to geographical facts and probabilities.

The particular vision under discussion was vouchsafed to a certain "hawk-faced, horse-minded character" Wild Horse Panhandle Phillips on the floor of a Wyoming bunkhouse. He co-opted Mr. Hobson, and together the pair of them fared forth in an old jalopy into the wilds of southern British Columbia on their quest for the last frontier.

They found their promised land, in the Blackwater River basin, a country which had already been looked over, and turned down, by the ranchers of the more open Chilcotin plateau, but which for the purposes of his story Mr. Hobson idealises and renders inaccessible by means of non-existent glaciers in the Itcha Mountains and exaggerated muskegs. Actually there are good trails into the country from various directions, the worthwhile lots had long been surveyed, and plans and surveyors' reports were available in Victoria. The country had been known and travelled since Alexander Mackenzie passed through in 1793, to the journeyings of Father Morice, and even to the honeymoon trip of Mr. Clifford R. Kopas in 1933 (see the *Beaver* for June 1947, with Mr. Kopas' picture of the pleasant looking, smiling Ulgatcho Indians—friendly even in Mackenzie's day.)

Romance rode with our two explorers. The Smith and Wesson 44 was "whipped out" for the first time close to an old established ranch house on Tatla Lake ("New country," Pan said softly; "it's better to be ready"), and from then on whenever a stick cracked in the bush. Finally, after a series of hair raising experiences with avalanches, "moth-eaten" grizzlies and blood-crazed cow moose, to the grim accompaniment of the Ulgatcho drums, they decided to locate in this great lone land and the Frontier Cattle Company was formed.

The Company acquired from the government two previously surveyed swamp meadows on the Blackwater ("Home Ranch") and bought out an old-timer on Batnuni Creek ("Batnuni Ranch"). To these holdings they added various leases and purchases, as for example Lots 1837 and 1835 on Tatelkuz Lake, surveyed by Mr. Merston in 1911; and onto the whole unwieldy "spread" they drove seventy-five cows and calves, and one bull who will undoubtedly go down in history as "Father of his Country" since, in common ranching practice on a brush range, a bull, when faced with a harem of seventy-five, is normally given two assistants. In the story, the cattle are driven over the phantom glaciers of the Itchas. In real life the Nazko Trail is handier.

Mr. Hobson has given us many a good story of what he whimsically refers to as "the North" but has left out one of the best. The Frontier Cattle Co. romped into its new found empire like schoolboys on a holiday, and Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. The time had come to check over the various lot boundaries and see a little more of the country under the guidance of a government party and, confronted with this blaze of new chaps and fancy "six-guns," the government outfit felt a bit dingy and down at heel. But being men of resource, and seeing that useless hardware was the order of the day, it was not long before they too were suitably adorned. Secured by bits of string and latigo lacing, frying pans and other kitchen utensils soon dangled from their belts, and they swaggered around the camp with the best. The explorers, your reviewer was informed with characteristic British Columbian understatement, "seemed rather put out about this"!

This book cannot be termed good publicity for British Columbia since it can only lead, in the end, to disappointment. On the reverse of the dust cover is a picture of Mr. Hobson himself, granite faced and gazing into that limitless never-never land of his boyhood dreams where six-guns pop and timber wolves moan spookily; where the ranchers all marry Indian Princesses and the fierce Ulgatchos ride around in opera hats.—*R. M. Patterson.*

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